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INDISCIPLINE social design principles and practices: how designers work in this realm

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Apoio e Colaborações

Abstract

This thesis is an exploratory study of moves and movements of the design discipline towards social and activist critical practices. It departs from a growing concern for design as a socially committed activity that has been around since the 1960s. The social turn, as we describe it, was a historical plea for designers to expand the nature and complexity of the problems addressed by design, moreover, to involve the users and stakeholders in designing processes. Turning to work with different sectors and diverse publics, the ‘social design’ movement emerged in opposition to the industrial and the commercial paradigms. As participatory and co-design approaches spread to general practice and for all kinds of purposes, social design became increasingly seen as a culture to represent a wider historical actualisation of the discipline. Still, in recent years, authors point to the difficulties of becoming socially engaged. Although literature on the ‘how of’ collaboration abounds i.e. the motivations, structure and techniques to involve others in design processes; it appears co-design entails ambiguous practices where designers often find themselves without a discipline. Struggles to craft a role for design in initiatives coordinated by networks of communities and institutions too often has led to actions imported from other fields hence the end of design.

Coming from a background in graphic design, taking steps to become a social designer, we experienced how difficult it is to do away with the discipline. Specific gestures, actions and products in our social engagements that destabilized the visual communication design process also revealed visual communication design practiced in unknown or unexpected ways. Shifting the perspective to consider, beyond destabilization, it is indiscipline that happens to design in the encounter with others we articulated the question: what if choosing to become social is not to lose the discipline? This matter is worth to research because while social design became known for its risky participatory moves, some authors point to shifts in the politics of designing that have not yet been clarified. Through a mixed methodology based on action research and grounded theory we devised case studies to better describe, explain and explore, from a performative perspective and deeper anthropological stance, all that happens in co-design beyond exclusive attention to the design expert. While disclosing different social form-acts of social interaction within design, four images of indiscipline emerged. 1) IT’S ABOUT THE HOW, 2) DESIGN IS THE SITUATION, 3) BEGININGS NOT ENDS, and 4) DESIGN IS A LIVING THING, all point to different sides of the performative and politics turn that happens to design when it becomes social.

Addressing the lack of discourse that does not treat the social as a irreducible complexity, this thesis develops a theory of design that reclaims the encounter with others as the space and possibility to grow the discipline in ways that even

unexpected may also be radically social. The main conclusion is that indiscipline is not anti-design but an expansion of design possibilities in the encounter with others, which not yet seen or made visible can potentially represent moves from conventional practices towards critical socially engaged designing. Recommendations for future research are to expand the inventive and pedagogic potentials of indiscipline as a concept to understand the social turn and to practice becoming socially engaged in ways that are deemed better for others and ourselves. Another opening is to understand how indiscipline may be articulated in design education how and when students may be ready for design practice to become a more living thing.

Keywords: social design, participatory design, co-design, indiscipline, activism, design practice, design critic, transformation

Resumo

Situada no campo do design, esta tese reporta um estudo exploratório de princípios e práticas de design social.

O design social é um termo, de entre muitos outros, que surgiu para designar um conjunto de ações e movimentos de crítica que vêm propor um papel mais comprometido e ativista do design na sociedade. Mais especificamente nos anos 1960's, apelava-se a um "design para o mundo real" que procurava uma mudança de prioridades dos designers para trabalhar com problemáticas ditas mais úteis e relevantes para a humanidade. Mas a questão é que todo o design é social. Portanto, para outros autores na mesma altura, a transição para o 'social' significava mudar não apenas os princípios mas a própria prática do design com vista ao envolvimento e participação efetiva dos beneficiários/utilizadores no processo de design. Daqui surgem movimentos de design participativo e colaborativo que são hoje parte da cultura do design em qualquer sector. Mesmo assim, face a este cenário, o debate contemporâneo centra-se nas dificuldades sentidas pelos designers nestes processos. O trabalho com diferentes disciplinas, grupos ou comunidades, implica uma expansão de "quem faz design" e "onde se faz design", que torna difícil distinguir o papel ou função efetiva de um designer. O social como escolha, não apenas como condição, gera processos em que os designers se encontram sem disciplina. Este aspeto é relevante pois enquanto alguns autores defendem que o design social engendra práticas arriscadas outros autores apontam mudanças nos princípios e na prática do design que precisam ser clarificadas. É aqui que se situa a problemática desta tese.

Seguindo uma motivação pessoal em construir um percurso ativista no design, esta investigação teve início na colaboração em projetos de ação local a partir do convite para desenvolver produtos de design de comunicação. A experiência do trabalho de campo trouxe precisamente as dificuldades apontadas pelos autores. Episódios específicos representam momentos de tensão e completa desestabilização. Contudo, essas mesmas situações aconteciam em momentos em a lógica de ação e pensamento da disciplina do design continuava presente. Mudando de perspetiva para considerar que ao invés de desestabilização, estes episódios eram situações de "design" começamos a questionar se estar em colaboração implicava necessariamente perder a disciplina. Os nossos episódios que davam a impressão de uma experiência de que já não estávamos a fazer design, revelavam inesperadamente o design feito de outro modo (talvez desconhecido ou invisível até então). Então se não o fim, mas é a 'indisciplina' que acontece no encontro com outros, estabelecemos a hipótese: todo o design é social, mas nem todo o design é design social.

Seguindo uma metodologia mista com base nos métodos de investigação-ação e

“grounded theory”, focamos o objeto e objetivo desta investigação: desenvolver uma análise de casos de “indisciplina” como espaço e possibilidade de expandir a disciplina do design e gerar um vocabulário sobre (“como os designers trabalham”), cujas situações inesperadas, podem ser também expressões de práticas e princípios de design radicalmente sociais. Identificamos quatro situações que nos levam a afirmar 1) que uma das questões críticas do design social é sobre o COMO; 2) que o início de algo feito no encontro com as pessoas e pelas pessoas não é o fim do design mas DESIGN É A SITUAÇÃO; 3) que os meios do design não servem apenas para atingir um fim, mas podem ser o ÍNICIO de muitos outros fins, finalidades, causas e futuros; 4) que o design pode ser uma experiência mais viva na expressão de quão “fraco, forte ou radical” é a relação entre ‘nós e os outros’ ou entre o social e o design. Apontando para diferentes formatos de colaboração pelo design, as quatro imagens de indisciplina revelam diferentes visões de como e porquê todo o design é social, mas nem todo design é design social.

Em conclusão, esta tese demonstra como a indisciplina é um conceito útil na compreensão e questionamento do que acontece ao design quando o social é uma escolha, e não apenas a sua condição. Portanto, as imagens podem constituir-se como princípios de transição da prática convencional para outros espaços e possibilidades de concretização da disciplina e das transformações mais relevantes que procuramos. As recomendações para futura investigação são continuar a experimentar a indisciplina como método inventivo para compreender o design social e abrir o campo da disciplina a outras possibilidades de ação. Mas também experimentar a indisciplina como dispositivo pedagógico para praticar o design como uma coisa mais viva, com e pelos estudantes de design.

Palavras-chave: design social, design participativo, co-design, indisciplina, ativismo, processos de design, crítica do design, transformação

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Reading instructions

This document is the main volume for the deliverable of the PhD thesis entitled “Indiscipline: social design principles and practices, how designers work in this realm”. The document is organised into five parts described below. Each part is divided into chapters and the structure is presented in the Table of Contents. The monograph cannot be fully grasped by approaching the parts and chapters individually, therefore, the reader is encouraged to read them in sequence, e.g. venturing to read one of the four cases in the Body, one must have read the Outline to understand what is the device to explore the cases. In this thesis, the classical linear structure enabled to make sense of all the complexity articulated in the research process. In consequence, jumping to the Discussion will be to miss all the crucial insights developed in the Body that became a foundation for the claims articulated in this part.

The monograph is written using the pronoun *we* to account my original work. The purpose has been to achieve theoretical sensitivity in what is being described enabling a more cautious articulation between my personal experience and the real situations lived, interpreted and shared with others. In regard to all the humans and nonhumans who and which have contributed to the social situations and social thoughts captured and expressed in this volume, using *we* is a form-act of acknowledgment and a hopeful thought that the people and the things involved can recognize themselves in this work without whom and which it would never have been possible.

PART 1 – Introduction – Introduces the general background, purpose and aims of this research.

PART 2 – Research Outline – Literature review on the historical turn to the social in the 1960s and the contemporary debates on the emerging concern for design as a social encounter. Description of the events that led to the encounter with the notion of indiscipline and explanation of the methodological shifts it provoked on the course of this design research: pointing to reconfigured research questions and discussing indiscipline as a hypothesis and device for a research on social design. Each chapter ends with a diagram to summarise the findings and perspectives of each section.

PART 3 – Research Body – Presentation and exploration of four design engagements each corresponds to one chapter divided into two main parts: 1)

presentation and description of the design engagement through a visual narrative that attempts to give a transparent and in depth view of the specific circumstances of where and who are participants and activities; 2) explanation and exploration through the binocular of indisciplinarity amplifying specific cases of destabilisation to formulate a specific image or situation of indisciplinarity that is grounded on the design engagement and represents a general insight about social design. Each chapter is summarised through a diagram.

PART 4 – Discussion – Discussion of the images of indisciplinarity that emerged in the Research Body through historical and contemporary debates and ideas found in the Research Outline. Discussion of the images addressed as moves or movements to indisciplinarity to thoroughly open up for different understandings of design and unexpected possibilities of social practice.

PART 5 – Conclusion – Concludes the research contributions and gives suggestions for further design research.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACMJ | Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude

CODE | The Co-design Research Group

ERC | “Exploring the contributions of Relational Space for promoting the Right to the City: experimental research in Cova da Moura, Amadora, Greater Lisbon”

FTF | First Things First

GESTUAL | Grupo de Estudos Socio-Territoriais, Urbanos e de Ação Local

TRADERS | Training art and design researchers in participation for public space

To Mom and Dad, Teresa and José.

1. Introduction

This thesis is a study of moves and movements of design practice towards the performance of social, activist or critical design work. It departs from some ideas that have been around since the 1960s whose debates generated a series of shifts in the field of design with expression in today's practices.

The social turn, as we name it in this thesis, was a historical plea for designers to expand the nature and complexity of the problematics they addressed (Papanek, 2005). It came about through an increased awareness of the impacts of human lifestyles and the consequences of any design decision in determining 'our common future' (Thackara, 2005; Shedroff, 2009). Articulating an opposition to the industrial and commercial contexts where design had so far flourished, some practitioners came to advocate for a shift in priorities. In search for the relevant and useful, designers moved to engage matters of quality of life and the fair sustainment of our societies in all its diversity. From designing more of the same or better artefacts, key aspects of the design discipline – process, techniques, skills, forms etc. – were applied to different contexts as practitioners became involved with different publics. Approaching the social as an object, health, education, social services, or policy making were some of the sectors where and with whom designers worked (Simon, 1996, Margolin and Margolin 2002, Erlhoff & Marshall, 2008). This resulted in the emergence of various practices bond to new intrinsic aims: "Social Design", "Design for Social Change", "Design for Social Impact", "Transformation Design", "Design for Social Innovation" and "Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability".

Reflecting in action about design conduct and how a service orientation sometimes invariably suggested who is and who is not involved in decision making provoked another shift. The social turn represented for other practitioners a move to involve the users and stakeholders more explicitly in design processes to explore design making as democratic practices (Sanders and Steppers, 2008; Mazé, 2014; Binder et al., 2015). Throughout the years, Participatory Design and Co-design methods and approaches spread (Sanders and Stteppers, 2008; Binder, Brandt and Gregory, 2008). Taking design further than a shift in motivations, the social turn articulated as a co-design turn began to destabilise the conventional understanding of what is a normal design practice and what is a social one. While some argue social design is a field with autonomous roles and functions (Tockinwise, 2015; Lasky, 2013), other authors articulate the social as an emerging culture in response to the more complex challenges that evolve across all areas. For these authors, design remains a problem-based solution oriented discipline only actualised in its political and ethical principles and practices. More specifically, no longer defined by the

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products, services, and communicative artefacts it produces, design is nowadays increasingly defined by the motivations of practitioners (Koskinen and Hush, 2016) and the tools and methods they use. (Manzini, 2015; Armstrong et al., 2012; Mazé, 2014) Another common thread has been an identification of Social Innovation as a site where designers can achieve more concrete social realisation. The goal and process to reconfigure relations between groups of people, resources, spaces and objects is a main characteristic of this emerging culture (Manzini, 2015; Mazé, 2014; Ericsson and Mazé, 2011).

Either choosing to involve users and stakeholders in design processes as partners or collaborators of the design work, or when design is commissioned to support social and political initiatives that take place through the networks of diverse institutions and communities, authors point to the difficulties of participation and co-design (Manzini, 2015; Mazé, 2014; Ericsson and Mazé, 2011). The role of the design expert is not clear, in fact, designers often find themselves without knowing what to project and experience themselves without a discipline (Manzini 2016; Bremner and Rodgers, 2013). Contemporary reflections on designing participations evidence that while most literature focuses on the ‘how of’ collaboration in terms of the motivations, structure and methods to involve others in design, it seems there is a lack of depth about ‘how to’ best collaborate in situations where everybody designs. In other words, where design agency and decision making are diffuse, widespread and distributed beyond the expert. This problem is worth to research because while social design became characterised by the “risky trade-offs between makers and participants” (Huybrechts et al., 2014), some authors point to a shift in the politics of the discipline (Mazé, 2014). Postindustrial formulations that entail the social as a medium and material, require design experts a long-commitment and to be highly disciplinary (Manzini, 2015; Ericsson and Mazé, 2011). Yet, implying different intermedial, adversarial, hybrid or inventive modes of action move design beyond the criticism to industrial and commercial paradigms. These practices actually transform the core of design’s activity understood historically as always and already a communicative and social process of conception. In co-design and design for social innovation the “where” and “who” of designing always become an open and ambiguous question (Manzini, 2015; Mazé, 2014). This is the point where we situate the empirical and theoretical contribution of this thesis. Precisely because socialization is a condition of design, that the social turn is profoundly non-trivial. Choosing to become socially engaged with other publics and different public arenas, the focus of this research is precisely the event of design where difficulties arise, although destabilisation does not represent the end of design. Instead it represents the revelation of different kinds of designing so far invisible or unknown.

Taking steps to become social designers ourselves, going out of the studio or the

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university to work with neighbourhoods and institutions, we experienced similar difficulties to become socially engaged. Contingency and value conflicts recurrently emerged in working with communities as experts of their own experience, posing challenges to establish common design languages while leading sometimes after long engagements to no concrete achievements of transformation. From a personal willingness to change daily professional design practice, we experienced in turn how difficult it was to do away with the discipline. How the visual communication design background sometimes pre-defined specific tasks to do posing difficulties to ground design work more firmly in the places and the problematics addressed by the collective. Furthermore, how sometimes completely changing the mode of design still enveloped the visual communication form-act in visceral and effortless efficacy. In these experiences conflict and uncertainty were not expressions of losing the design discipline. In fact, some episodes demonstrated that the difficulties were a sign of an expansion of the discipline in the encounter with others. Doing research about the social turn while experiencing ways in which conventional design became transformed by and re-configured through different social engagements changed the course of this design research. From a study of how *other* designers work with social matters, we turned to explore concrete moves and movements of becoming socially engaged that marked changes in our conventional practices opening up for different, unknown or unexpected forms and ways of designing. Hypothesizing all design social although not all design is social design, we term these moves and movements “indiscipline”.

Coming across with the notion in the first place articulated by Michel Foucault (1995) it became evident the focus of this research would be to study real cases from our own experiences of becoming social designers. For the author, indiscipline happens when oppositions to discipline, rather than offence, reveal other sides of discipline so far excluded or made impossible by internal norms (Foucault, 1995). If choosing to become social leads to an expansion of design’s possibilities in the encounter with others, from the perspective of Foucault, this involves adopting indiscipline as a device to look upon social engagements and carefully describe, explain and explore what comes in the continuity of design as a difference that matters. The value of this research lies precisely in the deeper engagement with visual communication design, knowing the practice from the inside, committed to transform it through the social encounters. Addressing the lack of research in the graphic design field this thesis is a valuable contribution. Still, it poses a limitation since we cannot separate the findings and moves of indiscipline from the goal and processes of making visual things. Reflecting in retrospection is another limitation of this research because we are not precisely experimenting social design. In turn, we amplify episodes that unfolded in specific social design ways with no chance for alteration. Yet, because we know how these have unfolded in reality therein

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precisely the inventive potential to ‘indiscipline’, hence, to use the notion as a device to explore what could have happened differently. When we came across with the notion of “the in-discipline of design” developed by Annie Gentes (2017) another surprising shift happened. For the author, indiscipline defines the aesthetics of design as a process of conception because it accounts how the discipline in its core is a spatial practice founded on encounters between things and knowledges that achieve unique compositions. Grasping design as a “field of tensions” from Gentes’s perspective, indiscipline became also a hypothesis. The fact that design is an indiscipline based on social encounters that the notion potentially represents the specific moment or action of transition from conventional design to social design, moreover, that it may account for another state of social designing that is not yet known although possible and maybe politically and ethically better.

Combining the vision of both authors into a “binocular of indiscipline” the notion became the essential concept of this research to describe, explain and explore the moves and movements of design towards social design. To conclude, the overall aim of this research is to develop a theoretical perspective that is beyond the conventional understandings of the discipline as an always and already social process but that attempts to critically expand limits, possibilities and knowledge of what is ‘social’ about design and contribute to contemporary design debates by revealing unexpected possibilities. In practical terms, tracing and analysing from within real design engagements situations and moves of the design discipline to indiscipline itself in relation to others, the specific objectives that stem from the general aim are:

= to actualise the discourse on social design that critically apprehends design from a deeper social stance i.e. the angle of ‘how to’ collaborate in relation to specific where’s and who’s.

= to use different vocabulary, concepts and notions to describe and explain design engagements and explore how these potentially change what it means to design.

= to adopt the viewpoint of different participants, who are not design experts, and attend closely to what they do in design situations;

= Specifically explore situations of tension in design situations and observe what all participants do in the continuity.

INDISCIPLINE

Outline

2. Research outline

This chapter provides an outline of the research that frames our focus and the methods we used to unfold design research. It is divided into three sections: (1) Background; (2) Objectives and Hypothesis; and (3) Research Design and Methods.

The Background section consists of the presentation of the topic and scope of this research. It is not an exhaustive state of the art rather the mapping of a set of ideas and debates about the social with the purpose of framing the context of action and reflection of this research. It corresponds to the first three sub-chapters. Chapter 2.1 which frames a brief historical account to outline the meaning of what we call “the social turn”. Chapter 2.2 which traces contemporary debates and issues raising questions to challenge the understanding of the professional design engagement versus the social design practice. Furthermore, it presents the landscape where and with whom this research has grown up with.

The Objectives and Hypothesis section accounts the events that led to the hypothesis and consequent shift in the methodological approach and aims of this research. In the chapters 2.3 and 2.4 we discuss the questions and theoretical perspectives that grounded the research shift and will run throughout the thesis.

The Research Design and Methods section presents more in depth in chapter 2.5 the theoretical devices with which this research unfolded, moreover, in chapter 2.6 the outlined research design and methodological approach.

Sections (1) and (3) conclude and summarise respective findings and perspectives in diagrams: mind-maps or tables.

Background

2.1 The social turn: a brief historical account

The social turn in design is a controversial subject. Marked by an emergent multiplicity of ways of action and reflection on the part of designers, what is ‘social’ about design and how it is practiced today remains very much open to debate.

A brief historical overview demonstrates a growing concern for the social as a subject matter in design since the 1960s. At the time, design was acknowledged as one of the major responsible disciplines in fairly compromising the future and quality of life in the planet. The dominant paradigm, inherited from the Industrial Revolution, was to design products and goods for mass production and consumption in support of global trade and local economies oriented to market sales and commercial business. But the effects of everyday design decisions¹ were becoming increasingly visible in the pressing environmental issues and wicked² social and economic situations found and reproduced at the global and local scales. Practitioners such as Victor Papanek (2005) in 1963 began to argue design was not about real people or real needs³ mounting a criticism and opposition to the industrial and commercial cultures within the discipline. In his book “Design for the Real World: human ecology and social change” Papanek explored ways through which designers may become more committed to society doing more meaningful and relevant work. Engaging practically and ideologically with the issue, the author proposed changes in the motivations of design practice in order to challenge the dominant mass production and consumption paradigm. Understanding design was “the most powerful tool with which man shapes his tools and environments (and, by extension, society and himself)”, designing for the real world was a claim to shift the foundations of design in capitalism towards prioritizing “the true needs of men” (Papanek, 2005, p. x). Turning to people and planet needs was a first move towards, what Magnus Ericson and Ramia Mazé (2010, p. 6) call, “design as a ‘critical practice’”. Shifting to address wider societal and political issues became the basis

1 Eighty percent of the environmental impact of the products, services, infrastructures around us is determined at the design stage.” (Thackara, 2005, p.1)

2 “Wicked problems” is an expression articulated in 1973 by social policy planners, Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber, to define complex systemic problems that cannot be addressed in linear ways given they are the results or symptoms of bigger, uncertain or multiple causes or issues.

3 “Design that is about appearance, or margins, or offerings and market segments, and not about real people — their needs, abilities, desires, emotions, and so on — that’s the design that is the problem.” (Shedroff, 2009, p. xliv)

for practitioners to articulate “a criticism from within”⁴ engaging their own design practice for different ideologies and values (Ericson and Mazé, 2010; Koskinen and Hush, 2016). Beyond an obstacle, design could be the key to approach serious and sensitive matters for the first time in a different way. Believing design had potentials and was endowed with proper abilities to articulate different concerns and operate within different sectors, design experts turned to explore what can design do to transform existing complex situations into preferred or desired ones⁵ (Simon, 1996, p.111).

In its early practical manifestations, the social turn was an application of the design process and its methods, aesthetics and techniques or *modus operandi* to an expanded range of contexts beyond the dominant industrial and commercial paradigms (Ericson and Mazé, 2010). Oriented towards the education, culture and healthcare sectors, for instance, the new emerging design practices were marked by a clearly social agenda. The purpose of practitioners was to make design accessible to those who otherwise or up until that point couldn’t attain or afford it, addressing issues related to injustice, inequality, lack of basic living conditions, lack of access, and others to oppose the market logics but also the model of the ‘designer as author’ who works mainly for the luxury niche.

Emphasising matters of social and everyday life, however, was not disconnected from the real contexts where life took place. The whole systems thinking that emerged with the first articulations of the term and approaches to sustainability⁶ came to influence designers to shift their attention from designing products to engaging processes of transforming human behaviours and whole cultural, political and organizational experiences.

We grow in design comprehending that all design is social. As a service profession, all designing is about others, therefore, it carries precisely ‘in service’ from the presumption of a socially engaged doing (Ericson and Mazé, 2010, p. 12). What inaugurates and drives a design process is precisely an encounter with a specific client, hence, different knowledges, disciplines, things and bodies play an instrumental role in practically addressing a problem and developing possible solutions in and by design. Through the genealogy of design as a problem-solving

4 “Design methods, aesthetics and techniques become a basis for practitioners mounting a ‘criticism from within’ — that is, societal and political engagement through action within their own design practice.” (Ericson and Mazé, 2011, p. 292)

5 In the view of American social scientist Herbert Simon (1996[1969]), design was understood as a diffuse ability, commonly embodied by a series of other disciplines, in the sense, as he argued, that: “[e]veryone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones”. (Simon, 1996[1969], p. 111)

6 In 1983, the World Commission on Environment and Development, known as the Brundtland Commission, drafted the UN report “Our Common Future” published in 1987 where the notion of “sustainable development” was defined as a common endeavour and compromise by all the nations in “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

activity,⁷ engaging societal and political issues meant the provision of products and services in response to ‘sustainable’, ‘humanitarian’ or ‘community-based’ challenges (Mazé, 2014). Through the genealogy of design as a reflective practice, however, in which design is conceived as an activity that is not separate from how a problem and solution co-evolve together (Schön, 1983), design was understood *as* a collective social doing wherein diverse producers participate with their different backgrounds, interests, concerns and languages and perform specifically different roles. Emphasising how design producers “must communicate with each other in order to bring a project to completion” (Schön, 1983, p. 182), reflective practitioners pointed to the tensions, uncertainties and value conflicts that emerged in design precisely because “the seeming objectivity of a consensual design world is not a given but an achievement, a product of the work of communicative inquiry.” (Schön, 1983, p. 183) Seeing design as a collective social doing, marked another critical move in design that expanded the complexity of the social turn. In 1972, in the proceedings book of the “Design Participation” Conference organized by the Design Research Society, in 1971, Nigel Cross claimed:

“professional designers in every field have failed in their assumed responsibility to predict and to design-out the adverse effects of their projects. These harmful side effects can no longer be tolerated and regarded as inevitable if we are to survive the future . . . There is certainly a need for new approaches to design if we are to arrest the escalating problems of the man-made world and citizen participation in decision making could possibly provide a necessary reorientation. Hence this conference theme of ‘user participation in design’.” (Cross *apud* Sanders and Stappers, 2008, p. 7)

Foregrounding design is not a neutral practice, Cross was pointing to the importance of working in the best interest of those to whom design products are for and whom design processes are about. The complexity of the challenges addressed by design already surpassed the limits and scope of the individual discipline, but at the heart of Cross’s claim lies a critique to design itself foregrounding the sociology of design as an important political and ethical issue for designers to take responsibility. In his view, designers need not only to collaborate with other disciplines it was fundamental to involve the ‘recipients’ and direct beneficiaries of their work in the process. To clarify, the reflective approach to design emphasised a slight yet crucial difference in how design might contribute to transforming situations into preferred ones. If design processes were in fact “social conversations” then design

⁷ Here we are drawing from the two main paradigms to describe design activity, according to Kees Dorst and Judith Dijkuis (1995), the paradigm in which design is seen as “rational problem solving process” that was found on Herbert Simon’s theories; and the paradigm in which design is a “process of reflection-in-action” that postulates design as constructionist process and was found on Donald Schön’s studies.

was not only about engaging the social as a cause or content of design work. Instead the socialization inherent to the design process could be seen as the proper medium to generate the most relevant transformations. Beyond an expansion of the problems that design addresses, the social turn came to represent an emerging concern for design as itself a social practice. The reflective approach suggested the processes and products of design were not disconnected from the social practice that brought design into being.

Between 1970 and 1980, according to Elizabeth Sanders and Pieter Stappers (2008), greater influence and design space was gradually given to non-designers in the fuzzy front end⁸ of designing processes. The first developments, according to the authors, were the practices of “user-” or “human-centred” design which emerged as a phenomenon mainly situated in the U.S. but which became widespread around the 1990s and 2000s as a model especially for product design (Sanders and Stappers, 2008; Erlhoff and Marshall, 2008). The approach is centred on the ‘users’ or the final recipients who will ultimately experience a product or service. In practice, the process departs from the perspective of the design expert to take into account the “user as subject” in the fuzzy front end setting out to define the purpose of design and get inspiration for ‘what’ to design from meetings, interviews and observations of specific situations. Further along, users can actually participate with opinions in prototype evaluations (Sanders and Stappers, 2008). In parallel, Sanders and Stappers argue, users came to gradually become involved in idea generation and concept development together with design experts playing the role of “user as partner” from “the position of ‘expert of his/her experience’”. In Europe, in the UK and in the countries of Scandinavian, a collaborative approach to the design process emerged in which the user integrates the design team and actively participates in all creative and critical decisions. These practices became known as “Participatory Design”⁹ wherein participation was understood as a way of democratizing the design process beyond individual acts of expertise by focusing on harnessing the users’ creativity and specific abilities to “co-create” what is and

8 Sanders and Steppers define “the fuzzy front end” as the moment of the beginning of design when: “it is often not known whether the deliverable of the design process will be a product, a service, an interface, a building, etc. Considerations of many natures come together in this increasingly critical phase, e.g. understanding of users and contexts of use, exploration and selection of technological opportunities such as new materials and information technologies, etc. (Stappers 2006). The goal of the explorations in the front end is to determine what is to be designed and sometimes what should not be designed and manufactured.” (Sanders and Stappers, 2008, p. 7)

9 Aiming to democratize the processes of introducing new technologies in the workplace of large production industries, Participatory Design emerged in the first instance to make sure that all decisions and strategies implemented by the companies were taken in the best interest of the workers and their specialized knowledge and work experience. In Norway, Sweden and Denmark, trade union workers collaborated with technicians and design experts to collectively understand the implications and possibilities of the new technologies and co-create the best conditions of work that would impact their colleagues (Sanders and Stappers, 2008; Ehn et al., 2014).

how it should be designed with the experts from perspective of designing things for their own purposes (Sanders and Stappers, 2008).

In logical sequence, the user-centred model was gradually being replaced by the participatory approach where the design commission is open and ‘what’ to design unfolds through the “design conversation” between users and designers that further became known as “co-design”. By the term, Sanders and Stappers, understand:

“collective creativity as it is applied across the whole span of a design process, [...]. Thus, co-design is a specific instance of co-creation. Co-design refers, for some people, to the collective creativity of collaborating designers. We use co-design in a broader sense to refer to the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process.” (Sanders and Stappers, 2008, p.6)

In contexts where the genealogy of design as a problem-solving activity was stronger, co-design practices extended to general design work for all kinds of purposes.¹⁰ According to authors, around 1990s participatory principles spread to the U.S. to be mainly and increasingly applied in commercial contexts (Sanders and Stappers, 2008, p.6). This may be due to a different socio-economic and political context where the critique posed to design could not handle the demands of the market (Erlhoff and Marshall, 2008, p. 291). Participatory Design represented an efficient way to conceive and refine the desired products and services providing a series of methods to guarantee sale/use moreover that production followed the specific organizational capacities and capabilities of the company. Consequently, Sanders and Stappers argue, “co-design” evolved throughout the decades to become instrumental in identifying opportunities for business, marketing and managing solution-oriented processes beyond the social turn (Sanders and Steppers, 2008, p. 8).

Shifting from “the design of products to designing for people’s purposes”, still, was turning the discipline of design into a less and less linear process. Growing experimentation with participatory or co-design tactics, events, spaces and/or workshops, where the emphasis was put on the reflective genealogy of design, foregrounded an expansion of the “where” and “who” of designing (Mazé, 2014, p. 565-566). According to Mazé (2014), the “where” of design was not only the geographical location where designing took place. Rather, in the co-design process it became a social and historical space in which different ways of framing

¹⁰ According to Binder, Brandt and Gregory (2010, p. 82): “Co-design, participatory design approaches and participatory methods are less and less seen as specialised predilections and democracy-oriented motivations; participation(-s) are already out there, circulating in general design practice and ‘in the wild’. Participatory workshops of diverse kinds are amongst today’s general design methods; workshops vary widely in composition, duration, scale, purposes related to design phases and processes, and in designers’ intentions and relations towards participation and with participants.” (Binder, Brandt and Gregory, 2010, p. 82)

and relating to the matters of concern implied different ways of designing things (Mazé, 2014, p. 565). Conceptually and methodologically speaking, “where”, as Mazé argues, “could be understood as a particular place or locality, existing or imagined, for some or in common.” (Mazé, 2014, p. 566) Similarly, the “who” of design changed when designing together became conditioned by the appearance and disappearance of participants beyond the expert and the materials formed or exchanged by or between the whole collective. The “who” was a complex relational flow between humans and nonhumans, that made design increasingly about the ways or methods of transforming relationships between actors and resources (Mazé, 2014, p. 561).

The social turn understood as a co-design turn effectively changed the discipline in much broader sense. According to Mazé, postindustrial formulations of design entailed more than applications of design logics and activities to social causes or designers working for the social sector.¹¹ Exploring questions of how design (re)produces and reorganizes social relations of ‘where’, ‘who’ and ‘what’ within everyday life,¹² in her analysis Mazé (2014, p. 562) contends that when design is based on transforming connections, routines and flows within complex social networks, systems or organizations it can enable temporary “reconfigurations of society from within.” (Mazé, 2014, p. 562) Emergent new design practices are oriented by principles and practices of societal and political transformation and relationality. The so-called ‘living labs’, ‘change labs’, or ‘design labs’ are examples in which designing through the multiplication of people and places expands the possibilities for local or community development¹³ (Mazé, 2014, p. 561; Ehn et al., 2014). If, so far, the work of design was fairly coincident with the

11 In Ramia Mazé’s view, postindustrial design practices have shifted from the “traditional focus on material form or technical function, or the economic and technical conditions of industrial production and market consumption” (2014, p. 561)

12 Drawing from Mazé (2014, p. 568), participatory design “is a question of how, where, by and for whom power – and consequent risk and responsibility – is handed over or taken up within pluricentric configurations of organizations and actors at different levels, across which resources and agency are not evenly distributed.”

13 In an interview with Mazé and Ericsson (2011), architect and researcher Doina Petrescu, of atelier d’architecture autorgerée (aaa) argues that: “The micro is a scale of operation — but it’s not opposed to macro. It’s a way of being active through networks and multiplication, and the potential to scaling up to the macro or the larger scale. [...] we are thinking the large scale through micro practices that began to relate, to collaborate, to start to address similar issues or to compare the issues that they address. And suddenly, this rhizomic structure becomes a macro practice” (Mazé and Ericson, 2011, p.90). The operation of and within networks to expand possibilities of local development practices and collaborations, is a very important aspect present in every aaa’s work, approach and *modus operandis*. Further in the interview, Petrescu introduces the term “trans-local” to highlight that “the local scale tends to isolate you” but by being connected and open it doesn’t mean that the “micro” practice is “small”, “minor”, but in fact that you are closer to the grassroots where and with whom everything is structurally operated (Mazé and Ericson, 2011, p.90).

work of the design expert,¹⁴ when the work of designers is akin to the processes of Social Innovation,¹⁵ a different politics of designing opens up¹⁶ (Mazé, 2014, p. 562). Supporting and co-creating micro ‘new societies’ or instances of social innovation, evidence new political roles for design beyond the industrial and commercial paradigms.

14 In a conversation with two Swedish architecture and design historians, Mazé and Ericson (2011, p.48) argue that if “in the past, the process of design and the work of the designer was coincident”, today having a social and political ethos requires great knowledge and very long-commitment, hence the difficulties that are often experienced in becoming socially engaged (Mazé and Ericsson, 2011).

15 It’s striking how actual materialisations and ways of action on the part of designers address the scope of and intervene with the three levels of Social Innovation described by Frank Moulaert et al (2013). The first regarding issues of survival and the satisfaction of human needs which are not met by systemic interplays. The second which cares for improving social relations and economies based on dynamics of reciprocity, solidarity, mutual learning, collaboration and cooperation, transdisciplinary, as opposed to cultures of competition and relationships based on exchange of interest. And the third regarding the systemic and contextual level of the macro negotiation of policies and laws across sectors enabling the emergence of other democratic practices (Moulaert et al., 2013).

16 Mazé argues that engaged with social innovation design: “is always doing politics in this sense – it is always acting in the world to (re)produce socio-spatial order or to rupture a particular order with other or alternative orders (see also Keshavarz and Mazé, 2013). It is always (re)producing or rupturing a particular ‘our’ or ‘commons’ in terms of how and where it is framed and staged, spatially and materially, for and by ‘who’ and in ‘what’ forms.” (Mazé, 2014, p. 562)

2.2 The social as a condition: the contemporary debates

2.2.1 What is the issue? The difficulties and possibilities of becoming socially engaged

Pointing to the lack of a social model of design to strengthen the transition to different sectors, Victor Margolin and Sylvia Margolin (2002) argued for the need of more design research to demonstrate what a designer can contribute to human welfare. Concerned with systematising the objectives, structures and methods of social design, the perspectives of these two authors were foundational for this research when we set off in 2013 to pragmatically research principles and practices of social design. Becoming acquainted with more recent literature, one of the main contemporary debates is whether the social turn defines the emergence of an independent scope of practice within the design discipline or a culture that has spread to the entire field representing a standard historical actualization. For some authors, social design represents an independent field within design to articulate different responsibilities and functions, and a different political agenda, in contrast with the established industrial roles and commercial activities¹⁷ (Tonkinwise, 2015; Lasky, 2013). The diversity of approaches to the social through different genealogies, however, represents for other authors a “discursive moment” (Armstrong et al., 2014) or “culture of emerging design” (Manzini, 2016). For these authors, whether designers engage in the service or the activist side of the social spectrum, what matters it’s the design approach or the methods.¹⁸ The becoming of an open-ended and networked process is only an immediate consequence of engaging with different matters of concern and involving different actors in design processes.

In the report “Social Design Futures”, Leah Armstrong, Jocelyn Bailey, Guy Julier and Lucy Kimbell (2014) argue social design is not precisely a field but “a set of concepts and activities that exist across many fields of application including local and central government and policy areas such as healthcare and international development.” (Armstrong et al., 2014, p.15) In this perspective, there may be no reason to rethink the design discipline for its inherent interdisciplinary nature as “a

¹⁷ In his reflection, Tonkinwise argues “social design is a thing” asking whether working with different contexts “is the task merely to lend the existing practices of designing, which have hitherto served mostly commercial clients, to these ‘social’ contexts? [...] To what does the ‘social’ in ‘social design’ refer? Is it just the context for designing or is it a qualifier for distinct forms of design?” (Tonkinwise 2015, p.1)

¹⁸ For Kimbell, “whether it is ‘social design’, ‘service design’ or ‘human-centred design’ isn’t that important – the approach and methods are. [...] This approach starts with spending time understanding people’s experiences and resources on their own terms ...” (Kimbell, 2012, p. xlv)

kind of ‘glue’ can make “knowledge and contributions of other fields actual and observable”, moreover, bring “issues and their publics into view and manifest and hold together a social world.” (Armstrong et al., 2014, p.20) From this premise, the authors discern three kinds of contemporary socially engaged approaches that have evolved (Armstrong et al. 2014, p. 29):

- 1) “Design for Social Innovation” is defined by “expert design contributions” working closely with participants to help “identify, support and develop opportunities for amplifying changing social practices”. Based on the perspectives of Ezio Manzini and François Jégou (2008), this approach foregrounds the role of designers in supporting “creative communities” and their social service and social enterprise initiatives (Armstrong et al. 2014, p. 29);
- 2) “Socially Responsive Design” is based on the perspectives of Gamman and Thorpe (2011) wherein designers act to bring a “designerly understanding” in response to a specific matter of care within diverse domains, namely healthcare, crime, local development and governance (Armstrong et al. 2014, p. 29);
- 3) and “Design Activism” which, for the authors, “usually sits outside commercial and governmental structures and works through settings such as grassroots activities, community action or pressure groups”. In this sense, this approach “includes the creation of artefacts and experiences associated with political discussion and protest, but also results in designs that intervene into everyday lives while raising political consciousness concerning collective challenges.” (Armstrong et al. 2014, p. 29)

Recognizing the emergence “new ‘objects’ of design for example: policies, strategies and behaviours” as expressions of an expanded social field of designing, the authors argue the question remains as to whether designers are adequately equipped to deal with cross-disciplinary issues and situations when the fundamental question of “how collaboration can best take place remains unclear.” (Armstrong et al., 2014, p. 20) The concerns raised by Armstrong et al. appear to recall the difficulties in grasping the “where” and “who” of design practices engaging the social as we have seen in the historical turn. Although the point of these authors appears to be situated in a different question.

Are the newly emergent objectives in fact objects of design and are they imported purposes, modes or forms from other disciplines, namely of policy making, community development or social science? Can designers effectively transform situations, or their contribution is that of an organizer or assembler of other disciplines and knowledges to design on their own? If so, what happens to design when others are gathered in collaboration?

In the view of designer, professor and one of the major experts and scholars in design for sustainability, Ezio Manzini (2005) the transition from the industrial paradigm towards sustainable societies and futures must be seen as a social learning process where design is one of the players but also a diffuse ability common to all participants.¹⁹ In his book “Design, When Everybody Designs: An introduction to Design for Social Innovation”, the author argues that contemporary design extends through an array of emerging social practices that originate in individuals and groups who are not design experts.

“Emerging design is a way of interpreting design and designing that is not yet mainstream, but that is expanding and, for all intents and purposes, will be the design of the twenty-first century.” Manzini (2016, p. 52)

To better understand these movements, Manzini demarcates a line between two groups and forms of design agency: diffuse designers and design experts. The first corresponds to the non-design experts. These are all the individuals, groups and disciplines with their natural human capability to design, in other words, the clients, users, citizens, consumers and experts of their own experience who have stakes in the issues that design addresses and/or to whom design products and processes are about (Manzini, 2015, p. 37). The second group represents those who were “trained to operate professionally as designers, and who put themselves forward as design professionals.” (Manzini, 2015, p. 37) Approaching these two groups as two different expressions of the same problem solving and sense making skill or capacity, the distinction represents for Manzini “a relationship that will develop as the two kinds of design work together to solve the many and diverse problems that our societies will have to face.” (2015, p. 3)

Whistling that “all design is (or should be) a design research activity and should promote sociotechnical experiments” (2015, p. 54), for the author, when designing occurs in the flows, networks and direct exchanges with diffuse designers it is not so obvious what is the role of design experts.²⁰ Later, Manzini (2016) came to argue that design experts experience a sense of inadequacy or lack of abilities in dealing with complex matters and in collaboration with others. The consequence has been to unfold designing processes into “a tangle of *solution-ism* and *participation-ism*” (Manzini, 2016, p. 56). Drawing from the author, “*solution-ism*”, refers to when in the name of efficacy, the design process deflates into a pragmatic,

19 “If, as is frequently said, the transition towards sustainability must be seen as a social learning process and ground for diffuse design ability, the designer increasingly takes the role of facilitator in the learning process, and of support for diffuse design skills.” (Meroni, 2007, p.15)

20 “... if co-design is a conversation everybody has to have its own position its own idea of something to say. If you don't have anything to say, you are not part of the conversation [...] I think that designers have capabilities and we should be recognized but it's not so obvious. [...] bringing what?” (Manzini, 2016a, p. 56)

narrow and expert-led process. In these cases, design expert techniques, actions, visions and ideas are considered by all participants as the only and main source from which effective results and innovative transformations are possible to be imagined and implemented (Manzini 2016, p.56). The more complex the issues, “the more the cultural dimension of the problems tackled and the solutions found must be investigated in depth to understand people’s needs, their capabilities and motivations, and the social dynamics in which they are living” (Manzini 2016, p.56). Therefore, “*participation-ism*” emerges when in turn design experts refrain from active participation, subordinating their specific knowledge and design techniques to the role of instrumental facilitation of assembling groups of things and people to ensure they are the ones who design things together autonomously. In the initiatives that fall outside the scope of design and where everybody designs, these two extreme modes of collaboration bring forth design expertise either to dominate or to disappear. So, the author proposes another distinction should be made. The “distinction between the co-designing process as a whole, with its open-ended nature, and the individual design initiatives, which will occur at definite times and in definite ways” (2015, p. 51). Understanding what design experts can do through their specific sub-disciplines, for Manzini this distinction is fundamental because it resolves the difficulties of finding a design voice in these complex initiatives. Through this distinction, “[t]he role of design experts is to trigger and support these open-ended co-design processes, using their design knowledge to conceive and enhance clear-cut, focused design initiatives.” (2015, p. 53) To clarify, a precondition to engage in such open-ended and transdisciplinary arenas, Manzini argues, is that there is already a corresponding design culture that can inform about ways to act and ways to avoid the tangle. The “capability approach” can provide a crucial understanding that:

“while design experts, [...], do not determine the way in which people will decide to operate, they do create *action platforms* and *sense systems* thanks to [...]. [...] his or her special skills and abilities, and with his or her special culture and vision of the world, [...] that give people, and the social groups taking part, a greater possibility of being what they want to be and doing what they want to do.” (Manzini, 2015, p. 98)

In this sense, the role of design and the output of its work is clear, for it is about, as Manzini articulates, generating the “enabling” and “supporting” tools, platforms, methods, and solutions that sustain the co-design process (Manzini, 2015, p. 55). Ambiguity rather than an actual experience, as we interpret the author, is a discursive articulation that affords opportunities in every step of the co-design journey for diffuse designers to actively co-design and ensure they are the ones who take over responsibility for the project and its results in the end (Manzini,

2015, p. 199). Co-design doesn't necessarily represent changing the business as usual, still, design practitioners have to be highly disciplinary, argues the author, and develop the soft skills necessary to interact with diffuse designers. In the words of the author:

“to adopt a dialogic approach, design experts must learn to listen, but they must also learn to propose their own ideas and visions. And to do it in the most appropriate way. The obvious precondition for being able to do so is that these ideas, values, and visions exist. That is, that a design culture capable to generate and cultivate them exists. And here we have reached a crucial point: If, as we said, the emerging design culture is still weak and reductive, how can it be strengthened and enriched?” (Manzini, 2016, p.58)

In summary, the work of the design expert is an application of knowledge that is expressed through the expert ability to frame contextual clear-cut contributions of the design discipline and profession. In Manzini's view, designing by the purposes of triggering and supporting others these practices can be regarded as “*design for social innovation*.” (Manzini, 2015, p. 55) To give different local projects a common direction, to indicate how to implement scenarios, to communicate or empower local initiatives, are examples of possible design roles whose design objectives and outcomes are more precisely “methods” (Manzini, 2015, p. 187). For the author, co-design affects the ‘how’ of design only in the sense that the commission is open-ended and it is on designers to define their role in relation to the collective of participants and the purposes of the social process. This does not mean there is nothing to design, it means the products, the communications, the installations, and all the other things that designers do become means or strategies or turn into activities in support of the co-design process and the people's initiatives (Manzini, 2015).

If co-design renders the ‘how’ of design immediately into an open question, how does crafting a situated role not transform the business as usual of design experts? Does a co-design situation imply for designers the production of the known design things or using the design expert ability for different purposes? To give an example, is the design expert process within co-design a matter of changing the purpose or context of use of a chair, that instead of being produced for an everyday life use, it will serve now as a “method” to facilitate the participation of people to design something else? Is co-design a matter of importing design solutions of is it asking for different kinds of sitting in, or places to sit, or participating by sitting, (or even why sitting and not experimenting something else), expert design contributions?

In a recent article, Ilpo Koskinen and Gordon Hush (2016) argue that socially engaged design can be best recognized in the motivations of design experts and genesis of the design work. Describing three main approaches, the utopian, the molecular and the sociological approach to the social, the authors articulate three different kinds of the ‘how’ of designing.

1) The Utopian approach to social design “derives its meaning from utopian beliefs that give meaning to the design outcomes.” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70) Practitioners are driven by visionary or political ideals, although, while improving situations, according to Koskinen and Hush, they may not be concerned with the larger structures which have created those situations in the first place. Addressing real world issues, does not happen from an open-ended (or rather, reflective) manner, only through the conventional design modes oriented by different visions of improving society (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70).

2) The Molecular approach implies that in designing processes performed with others “[t]he changes are small, particular to the issue and derive justification from the situation and its specifics” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70). In this sense, the concept foregrounds the need to build more subtle and humble approaches when the boundaries of design practice extend from objects to immaterial things (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 68). Design as a discipline and profession parred with others, as the authors argue, “can have an influence, even if it remains improbable to predict and control action results” on the agendas of transformation in the sense that “molecular projects can lead to massive changes given the right conditions.” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 67)

3) The Sociological is an approach “in which design is informed by sociological theory, which gives designers an insight into the social structures that produce and maintain the situations they try to change.” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70) Building on social science knowledge, allows designers structurally embedded positions within networks of diverse and heterogeneous actors that make possible to reconfigure social relations in much more critical and theoretically grounded ways than the previous. As Koskinen and Hush argue, it “can be molecular in its strategy, but it can also aim at changes in structures that pertain to persistent social problems through an address to policy formulation.” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70)

What is striking about Koskinen and Hush’s analysis is an observation that, despite the different ethos, the three approaches usually end up designing objects or situations that look quite similar (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70). As the authors argue:

“some designs aim at changing the situation, while others focus on objects. In either category, the designers can either work as outside experts who seek to impose their expert definitions on people or as insiders who seek to articulate

local needs through some variety of co-design process.

One implication of the fact that social designers usually end up creating objects or situations is that they look quite similar. A desk for returning books to the library or a syringe exchange box will not look very different regardless of whether it is done by a designer leaning towards utopias versus a designer whose sympathies are molecular. [...] Again, our warning is to look at the background and not be misled by the appearances. Lumping various designers together by looking at their design outcomes alone would be akin to saying that there is no difference between a grill by Electrolux and one by DeLonghi.” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 70)

Regardless of the social design approach and process, for the authors, the outputs of socially engaged design can be misleading. To grasp and establish differences in practice, it's in the background, that is, in the motivations and genesis of the design work (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 65). According to the authors, for instance, utopians generate “socio-political aspirations” based on utopic ideals, the molecular produces “the traditional (but innovated) objects” based on situated social engagements and curiously the sociological approach generates outcomes that are “problematic, existing as neither design(ed) solutions nor policy change” therefore “the challenge for sociological social design is to formulate a category of designed outcome equal to its critical ambitions.” (Koskinen and Hush, 2016, p. 68) If the more concrete and tangible ‘what’s’ do not change or appear imported from other disciplines what evidences there are differences in the ‘how’ of design between conventional processes and socially engaged practices? This is the challenged of ambiguity raised by Manzini foregrounding the debates around whether or not social design is a thing. But in their argument, Koskinen and Hush raise a fundamental point. If there are no differences between outcomes, are design experts in fact co-designing?

If there is such a thing as social designing, have we been looking in the right direction? What should be considered the social design outcome? What things evidence there was co-design and not an always and already social relationship between clients and designers?

The implication for dealing with unknown or unfamiliar situations, according to Craig Bremner and Paul Rodgers (2013), is that designers do not know what to project. Engaging with unconventional social matters and diverse stakeholders, precisely implies an experience of ambiguity and uncertainty (2013, p. 9)

Bremner and Rodgers argue that when design is set independently of its professional domains into and within co-design situations, there is always an epistemological shift. Instead of conditioned expert responses, designing processes and designed

products emerge from “a globalized state of culture” (Bremner and Rodgers, 2013, p. 11). That is, engaged in a collective and plural entanglement of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in interaction, the situation of co-design generates “the traditional design disciplines need to transform themselves” (Bremner and Rodgers, 2013, p. 11). In this sense, to perform the role of the conventional disciplines of design is, for the authors, one possibility of response to a situation where and when design researchers and professionals always find themselves “without discipline” (Bremner and Rodgers, 2013, p. 9).

Design as a Discipline, Nigel Cross (2001, p. 56) argues, means “that there are forms of knowledge special to the awareness and ability of a designer, independent of the different professional domains of design practice.” In the view of the author, “a science of design” is constituted through the reflective practice of design in situation and not the other way around. That is to say, design is “a non-scientific or a-scientific activity” because there is no explicitly organised, rational and wholly systematic formula of designing, only contextual performances of knowledge which form modes of practice and specialisms that cannot be predicted nor contained (Cross, 2001, p. 56). Still, these are always part of the discipline of Design within its own rigorous culture (Cross, 2001, p. 56). Following Cross’s argument, Bremner and Rodgers argue that given the scale and complexity of the challenges, the discipline of design “stripped of its center” may manifest itself in different, perhaps even unknown, forms and abilities that in co-creation settings may work to the advantage of all participants (2013, p. 11). To be found without discipline, as the authors argue, is to move “from a convention domesticated by practice to a responsive reformulation of practices revolving around networked communication infrastructures” (Bremner and Rodgers, 2013, p. 11). In other words, it’s in and through the social encounter with others, non-experts, that designers may figure “what to project”, by responding to and through the specific co-design situation beyond the discipline and its conventional or recognizable forms and abilities. Therefore, “the possibility exists that design might need to be “undisciplined” in its nature” in order to take “in a new role of showing us the way through discipline.” (2013, p. 11)

In the contemporary debates about the social, so far, there is a common concern for the autonomous expression of the design discipline and profession when it is rendered unclear in co-design situations. Instead of autonomy being found on contextual repetitions of the same behaviours as in Manzini’s and Koskinen and Hush’s observations, Bremner and Rodgers situate the expression of the design ability within the experience and unfolding of the co-design practice itself. As we interpret the authors, this might mean that instead of dismissing unexpected things or unfamiliar actions for non-design or for objects of other disciplines, what if we look at collaboration as itself a design situation and not a situation where design

experts have to find a role, or where others are the ones who are designing and not the expert? Drawing from authors, the social is a condition, not a choice. If co-design is design, then the expert is always and already designing. Drawing from Bremner and Rodgers, confronted with unfamiliar situations she is not without a discipline, rather the discipline is open to disclose its unknown forms.

What if we consider all the unexpected and unfamiliar things that happen in co-design as design things? Where does design end and co-design begins? What delimits the design expert engagement within the co-design event? Are they different practices as one inside the other, or the same but expanded?

According to professor Johan Redström (2013) the emergence of the sub-disciplines of design can be described as an “evolution by addition” when design engaged with the industries of mass production, marketing and commerce for mass consumption (Redström, 2013, p.17). As the author explains:

“entire areas of design have emerged as a response to new individual and societal needs and desires. Quite often, such responses have been in relation to a set of possibilities opened up by someone/something else—as in how ‘industrial design’ emerged as a response to the possibility of mass consumption opened up by mass production, ‘interaction design’ as a response to information technologies, or ‘sustainable design’ as a response to sustainable global development.” (Redström, 2013, p.17)

The very notion of being in service to others maintains that the relationship between design and other knowledge practices is not about “simple causal connections between emerging needs and new design opportunities, since it is also likely the result of a certain mindset.” (Redström, 2013, p.17) For the author, any design act of making, representing, expressing, shaping, reflecting, interpreting, reformulating, and redesigning “form” carries an associated design act of interpreting and experiencing it. This combination co-determines the sensible/perceptible form that the form-giving gesture has and what kinds of forms it actually generates (Redström, 2013, p. 23). In this view, Redström proposes an actualization of the notion of form considering the “form-act” as a notion to address in contemporary terms what is form and how it emerges in designing (2013, p. 25). The “form-act” consists in:

“a kind of assemblage composed of articulations of certain expressions and sets of acts in which these expressions emerge, [...] and a range of material, social, and other aspects that provide the wider context of where these articulations and acts take place.” (Redström, 2013, p. 25-28)

Postulating a new concept of form, the “form-act” emerges to Redström (2013) as a means to reveal how in the course of design history “the notion of form” has changed very little (Redström, 2013, p. 26). Drawing too heavily on hermeneutic perspectives, the author explains, “form” in design has been predominantly approached from a “static and visual” notion of the discipline which to grasp the emerging contemporary design practices has become almost obsolete. In his essay, Redström argues that the most explicit feature of this static and visual understanding of form and of design is through the “images” (Redström, 2013, p.26). That is to say, the pictures or photographs that not only come to define what a given design is, but also the mode of experiencing and understanding the particular design situation. The image of a symbol set on a coloured canvas tells a completely different story than that of the picture of the symbol printed on a set of flags hold on to people’s heads. Where? Why? Who are those people holding symbols in their heads? (see chapter 3.2.1) Whereas, the former is an abstraction in which spatial, temporal and relational aspects of design are removed, in Redström’s terms, form is also “fossilized” as it appears from a single perspective, a static angle, a fixed distance and a directed and controlled look (Redström, 2013, p.27). In turn, the latter presents form in interaction and actual function, featuring how form can manifest in situated and embodied ways that come to have eventual effects in the world with and beyond form (Redström, 2013). While the static and visual approaches inherited from the past are still valuable, argues the author, their interpretation as descriptive for ‘what is design’ remains to the detriment of embracing the heterogeneous ways design experts are working today (Redström, 2013).

This recalls the debate raised with Koskinen and Hush about the forms of the outcomes of social design being similar. In our view, drawing from Redström, the social turn can be regarded as a mindset. Similarly, to how other areas of design have emerged through the possibilities of the industrial market or the new information technologies, social design may be a form of design in response to sustainable well-being and social justice or dignity, cultural pluralism, etc. But perhaps social design as a mindset is also beyond a specific field and comes to represent the very social addition that is characteristic of design to evolve differently attached to others. Precisely because design is always and already social, and we still address it as design, that perhaps social design foregrounds the appearance of different possible additions (to other sectors and different agents in society) and social ways of designing. This is why maintaining in the contemporary vocabulary that design processes and design outcomes continue the same appears as a reproduction of the industrial and commercial mindset that never accounts for the expansion of “where” and “who” that occurs in co-design and focus solely on the instrumentality of the social encounter to produce something specific and recognizable, a standardized form of what is the normal design act.

**How does the “image” of what we are used to do – that emerged from the addition to the industrial and commercial sectors – changes when we chose to work different sectors?
Does design remain the same in the encounter with different agents in society? How does design form change when we chose to involve non-designers in design? If there is no “image” of what we are supposed to do in co-design, do designers perform the same expected design form-acts?**

2.2.2 The social encounter as a condition

This doctoral research on “social design principles and practices: how designers work in this realm” came about because of a personal aspiration to change our professional design activity. In parallel with the theoretical review, we made a social turn. Going out of the studio and the university to work with a constellation of communities, groups, neighbourhoods, people and diverse nonhumans became the basis for a richer empirical work. Studying with others by designing things together with them, enabled profound internal transformations and an expansion of the potential knowledge contributions of this research. This part presents the social milieu this design research grew up with and the ideas that we found moving and crucial to reflect about and practice social design.

2.2.2.1 Participation is risky

Identifying this research with the question of what happens when design researchers leave their studios to encounter neighbours, local entrepreneurs, policy makers, and a wide variety of people who may be interested in joining a collective exploration of public issues, in the course of this research, we attended a set of public events organized by the research network and project ‘TRADERS’ (short for ‘Training Art and Design Researchers in Participation for Public Space’). In the form of short courses and seminars, the events gathered a wide range of researchers coming from diverse fields and places to explore matters of participation in public space and/or specific methods for engaging citizens to participate in public issues.²¹ Providing a deeper understanding and opportunity to experiment with the notions of co-creation

²¹ The TRADERS events which we participated were: in 2014, The Summer School: On participatory art and design and the public space; in 2015, The Autumn School: On the role of participatory art and design in the reconfiguration of work; and in 2016, the Final Conference called Mediations – Art & Design Agency and Participation in Public Space. See: <http://tr-adrs.eu>

and participation in and by design, there were a set of ideas that became crucial to this design research. Some of these are captured in the book “Participation is Risky: Approaches to Joint Creative Processes” edited by Liesbeth Huybrechts (2014), one of the supervisors in TRADERS. The book explores practices of artists and designers understood as “makers” who intentionally create projects to involve other “participants”, users, publics or actors “coming from different professional domains, or communities” (2014, p.10). First, a fundamental idea became that participatory or codesign practices configure design situations that involve “risky trade-offs” (Huybrechts et al., 2014). Having an uncertain and undefined outcome exposes makers and participants to what their encounter might bring (Huybrechts, 2014, p. 55). Sharing knowledge, negotiating decisions and actions within a network of people and who come from many different fields and whose roles (as makers or participants) may be unclear or shifting, defines risk and uncertainty as inherent qualities of participation (Huybrechts, 2014, p. 51). In this scenario, Huybrechts argues, participatory processes are on-going, multi-directional, and multi-vocal processes that potentially generate radically different decision-making situations thereby opening up the field of design to different intermedial, adversarial, hybrid and generative modes of practice (Huybrechts, 2014, p. 50).

A second crucial idea about participation processes came from the notion that design evolves via a series of “things” or exchanges between people and objects that do not necessarily refer the final product of design (Huybrechts, 2014, p. 53). “Things” are not closures of the design process, instead they emerge in the situation as means to keep participation flowing (Huybrechts, 2014, p. 32). This notion foregrounds an understanding that because participation is a purpose the design process evolves production and reception at the same time. In other words, Huybrechts argues there are two different phases of participation that represent different ways in which things emerge and how the design process evolves. These are “project-time” and “use-time”, as Huybrechts explains:

“In project time the things are often strongly moderated by a group of makers who organize people’s participation around temporary objects, with an eye on generating new ideas for future products or works. In use-time, things can be described as participants who organise their participatory exchanges themselves around (a series of) objects, possibly even independently of the group of makers. These exchanges are, however, regularly facilitated by a kind of infrastructure set up by makers to facilitate this self-organization.”
(Huybrechts et al., 2014, p. 54)

In “project-time”, according to the author, participation is formally structured by makers who aim to involve and facilitate participation of others. In “use-time”

participation is more informal because the aim is not to involve participants in the design process rather “seeing every use situation as a potential design situation” (Huybretches et al., 2014, p. 38). These two phases may be sequential as well as they can also run in parallel depending on the project, the process or the thing.

2.2.2.2 Rehearsing the future

Approaching three years of research, we engaged an 8-month ERAMUS+ internship at CODE – Center for Codesign Research.²² Engaging with the co-design teaching and research group, the meetings, the reading circles, the projects, and ongoing conversations, were one of the most rewarding and fruitful activities of this PhD. Opening up our empirical work to co-design practitioners had a tremendous transformative effect on this research and its lines of thinking and doing that collaborations and mutual transformations continue still.

From the notion of “things” afforded by TRADERS through which design and participation co-evolve together, CODE introduced a more nuanced view of the co-design process. Departing from an anthropological awareness of the design situation, the group describes the here and now of making and participation as a practice akin to “rehearsing the future”. The notion is captured in the book “Designing Anthropological Futures – DAIM” edited by Joachim Halse (2010), to state a particular participatory approach that takes “concrete interaction as the starting point for our design work.” (Halse, 2010, p. 14)

Beyond knowing about the users, or “assume that future needs are somehow already “out there” waiting to be discovered [...] because they assume that once we have collected enough data about user needs we will be able to invent the right solution”, Halse argues co-design unfolds “right there where lived life meets imagined artifact” (Halse, 2010, p. 14). Co-design experts work through ongoing prototyping of ideas, things, thoughts, insights, and making physical/visual/tactile sense of experiences or knowledge. In this view, they “are rehearsing the future as much as they are discovering options or devising plans.” (Halse, 2010, p. 10) The idea of rehearsal, which is drawn from performance studies, Halse argues:

“collapses the front end and back end of the design process, in that we already from the very beginning do what is usually in the end: rehearsing the relationships and practices that follow with a new artifact. A focus on the meeting between lived life and artifact is relevant throughout the process.” (Halse, 2010, p. 17)

²² Group founded by Thomas Binder, Eva Brandt and Joachim Halse originally based in the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Copenhagen, Denmark. See <https://codesignresearch.com>

An important point made by the group is that co-design denotes collaboration rather than persuasion or compromise (Lenskjold, Olander and Halse, 2015, p. 67). In this sense, it must “embody a different form of activist agency—one that is experimentally and immanently generated only as the design project unfolds” (Lenskjold, Olander and Halse, 2015, p. 67).

CODE’s notion of co-design amplifies the idea of time in design. While “rehearsing the future” means that what participants do in the present is an anticipation of what might emerge in the end of the process, it also means that project-time is use-time. That co-designing things for the future means using them now which states designing is always an open process. That the process and the products are never fixed or complete, rather “incompleteness” is the normal state of co-design (Halse, 2010, p. 36). Incompleteness ensures there is no premature closure and “provides for a flexibility of interpretations that is crucial for continuous engagement and participation.” (Halse, 2010, p. 36) Although, it implies increased responsibility from co-design experts because the process literally emerges as the unfolding of interactions between participants because co-design is matter of *being in* designing. In the group, there is this idea that co-designers are not just co-workers but people who enter into other people’s lives and try to make a meaningful contribution. This sense of a common ground, places designing on an existential plane of making and ethics. The ethics of co-design is situated in actual interactions not in the reception of ‘properly’ designed products. For the group, the issue with socially engaged processes is that “designing things together” means literally that “[w]e must abandon the modernist ideas of radical invention of the new. Things emerge relationally.” (Binder et al., 2015, p. 162) Engaging practically and ideologically with “democratic design” experimentation²³ the group argues for “shift from a focus on users and representation towards citizens and publics, including not only human, but also nonhuman participants.” (Binder et al. 2015, p.153) In their view, “[p]articipatory or collaborative design is not only compositional in the way it is made, but also in the designerly way it makes, [...] through prototyping activities and joint trail blazing, literally ‘drawing things together’.” (Binder et al. 2015, p. 157) In other words, design is a practice that “draws” as assembles or gathers things and groups of things (in the broadest sense, as humans and non-humans) to design “not as a radical invention of the new” but as a way of inventing through putting things in relation and composition as literally ‘drawing things together’ (Binder et al. 2015, p. 162).

23 As the authors argue, co-designers “work by making issues experientially available to such an extent that ‘the possible’ becomes tangible, formable, and within reach of engaged yet diverse citizens. At the heart of democracy lies the option to disagree and explore alternatives. Democratic design experiments are, above all, committed to continuously finding new forms of emerging publics and aiming to enrich the repertoire of democratic forms of expression.” (Binder et al., 2015, p. 163)

In the continuity of this idea, another notion that became fundamental for this research was the concept of “design event” developed by Li Jönsson (2015). It describes designing processes:

“made up of different parts that come together, impossible to define by one entity. It can never exist only as an invitation, an object, one person, or a conversation. [...] the strength of the event description [...] means that we cannot encounter objects or subjects by themselves, but always in processes of formation that are hybrid and mix and meld a human/non-human mingling.” (Jönsson, 2015, p. 198)

Jönsson’s work addresses the lack of studies and literature to approach design as a social assembly of diverse actors beyond mainly and only humans. The author develops an argument that attempts to capture how design as a process “literally starts to connect elements, to expand the present through connecting a diversity of entities that were next to each other before, that now connect together.” (Jönsson, 2015, p. 196) These entities not need to be human but machines, animals, sounds, activities and all those things which take part in the event of designing and finally achieve not designed products but always design events. Jönsson and CODE are part of a branch of design research which adopts an expanded view of the design process, therefore, arguing design is “not just a question of satisfying needs or demands expressed by well-identified human beings. It is also about shaping new forms of human agencies and consequently constructing new types of collective life” (Jönsson, 2015, p. 105).

2.2.2.3 Citizen Designers

The encounter that open up the path to immediately transform our practice was with the research group GESTUAL – On Socio-Territorial, Urban and Local Action Studies.²⁴ Based in the School of Architecture, the group brings together a growing number of researchers, teachers and technicians – urban planners, architects, geographers, sociologists and anthropologists – involved in wider networks to work on spatial justice and the co-production of spatial quality. Operating in line with Henry Lefebvre’s proposal of the “right to the city”, the main purpose of GESTUAL is to reflect in and through action possible expressions of the notion addressing it through the contemporary visions of other authors such as David Harvey who rethinks the right to the city as an individual right to change ourselves

²⁴ GESTUAL was founded in 2017 by Isabel Raposo through the project “Urban reconversion and reinsertion of neighborhoods of illegal genesis: socio-urban evaluation and integrated solutions of strategic planning” based in The Research Centre for Architecture, Urbanism and Design (CIAUD) and the Faculty of Architecture University of Lisbon (FAUL). See: <http://gestual.fa.ulisboa.pt/en>

by changing the city. Bearing “the city” as an object of study and space for utopian experimentation,²⁵ GESTUAL addresses issues related with ‘marginal’ territories where so-called informal, illegal, low class, low employment neighbourhoods, communities or settlements are situated. These, more specifically, in the city of Lisbon correspond to the suburbs of the capital, but they also borderline the main cities within the Greater Lisbon area, namely Loures, Sintra, Amadora, Almada. Exploring questions about the ‘margins’ of urban space and justice, the group engages with these territories through participatory methods and ethnographic approaches to involve the communities, stakeholders, public and private institutions and enhance potentially local emancipatory processes.

Encountering GESTUAL marked an individual social turn. Invited by members of the group to participate and take the role of a graphic designer in some projects taking place in few of the neighbourhoods in Greater Lisbon, these design experiences that transformed personal ways of designing became at a crucial point the basis of the empirical work of this research. To note, although these empirical engagements were set within the actions and reflections of GESTUAL in “the city”, we do not formally engage in Spatial Studies. Through the ways in which we immediately paid more attention to the minor scales, namely, to the objects and bodies in interaction, our design lens moved in mainly two directions. The first concerning the deeper motivation of this thesis to redirect a specific design profession towards an activist social and political practice. The second in regard to the Portuguese scenario where the social is a diffuse and marginal matter of orientation within the design discipline.

1. The visual conundrum

Historically, the notion of activism within graphic design is associated with commentary.²⁶ The anticipated contribution of a graphic designer is to design

²⁵ For Victor Margolin (2014) the notion of “scale”, as both ‘dimension’ (in quantitative terms) and ‘impact’ (in qualitative) can help to clarify three fundamental roles of design in society, each with its own socio-political dimensions, implications and consequences. The first is the micro-level which relates to personal actions which can be individual (i.e. independent practitioner) or collective, in association with others (professional partners, friends). The second role corresponds to an intermediate-level, in which the individual can still affect and influence wider groups, such as social or professional organizations, associations, institutions, social networks. Then, the macro-level which concerns governments, international organizations and big corporations with millions of people involved. This third and last scale, according to Margolin, is often beyond reach of the individual. It’s the intermediate-level that provides design experts the opportunity for developing transformative practices referring the “city”, no longer the artefact, as the most effective element for ideological and practical fulfilment (Margolin, 2014, p. 32). The city, Margolin argues, is on the boundary of the intermediate-level potentially allowing different decision-making processes and policies that can affect urban populations and transform human behaviours.

²⁶ This argument is made clear by David Sterling and Mark Randall, in an interview with Steven Heller (2003), who claim that: “[t]he operative word is act. You can design a poster about literacy or you can teach a kid to read. While the poster may be a valid and important part of the

marketing campaigns, propaganda posters, digital platforms, or other graphic communication tools for social causes, to brand a non-profit organization in the social sector, etc. This pattern of understanding the discipline as a fixed “form-act” has its consequences.

Flourishing from and through the mass communication paradigm within the marketing and commercial sectors of industry, the discipline of graphic design grew to a point that responses against advertising and the consumption culture began to manifest.²⁷ The 1960s were a pivotal moment when the “First Things First” manifesto was published by Ken Garland (1964) and undersigned by a range of other visual communication practitioners. It advocated “a reversal of priorities” away from selling and promoting trivial things such as “dog biscuits, designer coffee, diamonds, detergents, hair gel...” (Garland, 1964). The manifesto proposed a mindshift toward the production of other kinds of meaning and the application of designers’ skills and imagination to the “worthwhile purposes” of education, culture and more relevant and useful social demands (Garland, 1964). Notwithstanding the rapid transformations in information and communication technologies and cultures, between 1960 and 2000, moreover the movements of design thinking, participatory and co-design practices, human-centred methods and tools, not to mention the birth of more sub-disciplines, namely service design, experience design and interaction design, in the turn of the new century, this same manifesto was renewed. In 2000, a second version of the FTF Manifesto was published and undersigned by a growing list of contemporary practitioners, who still stated that 36-years later argued that advertising continued to be mainly what graphic designers do and how the world perceives graphic design. The persistent and explosive global demand on the same trivial things, they argued, had rendered more urgent the message of the original call. Commercial work has always paid the bills, yet “[u]nprecedented environmental, social and cultural crises demand our attention”, and because graphic designers can do much more “in favor of more useful, lasting and democratic forms of communication” a reversal of priorities is fundamental (Adbusters, 2000).

Grasping graphic design as a sub-discipline that has emerged through the possibilities of mass communication media as a kind of “evolution by addition” to

equation, we wanted to act more and comment less. [...], we decided to follow our core belief that true change comes through action and not commentary. [...] Commentary is visual; it is sexy and can grace the pages of industry publications. Action is not: what would you show your peers in *Graphis*? (Heller, 2003, p. 56) [...] Too often in the design community the interest lies in the form, not the function.” (Heller, 2003, p. 57)

27 In the preface to his book “Design for the Real world: Human Ecology and Social Change” written between 1963-1970, Papanek argued that “[t]here are professions more harmful than industrial design, but only a few of them. And possibly only one profession is phonier. Advertising design, in persuading people to buy things they don’t need, with money they don’t have, in order to impress others who don’t care, is probably the phoniest field in existence today.”

advertising and marketing (Redström, 2013, p.17), the time gap between the two FTF manifestos evidences how disciplines act as a “mindset” propagating through time and space in spite of alternative forms – namely, service design, experience design and interaction design. Both manifestos make note that graphic design is a discipline dependent on industrial standards and grounded in the commercial setting. Although the abilities of design itself beyond what the industry opened up, they argue, make for graphic design a potential discipline and profession for doing so much more.

In 1964, the reversal of priorities translated into a shift in the content of the design work. Practitioners advocated in the manifesto that “signs for streets and buildings, books and periodicals, catalogues, instructional manuals, industrial photography, educational aids, films, television features, scientific and industrial publications and all the other media through which we promote our trade...” could become the means for articulating different purposes and causes, namely in education, culture. (Garland, 1964) In 2000, however, the same argument that it’s the “social marketing campaigns, books, magazines, exhibitions, educational tools, television programs, films, charitable causes and other information design projects...” through which graphic designers may redirect the discipline works as a disturbance (Adbusters, 2000). It reveals an ongoing underlying struggle to formulate different understandings and possibilities of the discipline outside and beyond historical frames.

Still, treating artefacts which have precisely evolved by addition to advertising and mass consumption as what graphic design is and what being in service, as a graphic designer, is about, the FTF 2000 demonstrates how graphic designers continue to approach the social as content. The debate about how and why visual communication designers separate form from design actions and context is old.²⁸ Repeatedly, in historical and contemporary discourses, graphic design products are considered mere ideological vehicles for every commercial or other “useful, lasting and democratic” purposes. In this view, activism is a form of criticism from within the mechanisms and logics of graphic design, but it is not transformative of the practice of visual communication itself. It is a form of commenting on what designers do although it does not precisely actualize or transform its form-acts, thus setting a standard or rules not only for what is the discipline but for what may be its alternative forms. That is to say, this commentary form-act of approaching activism is expressed in the ways we have been treating different

²⁸ “Divorcing design form from content or context is a lesson in passivity, implying that graphic design form is something separate and unrelated to subjective values or even ideas”, claimed Katherine McCoy back in 1993 (McCoy apud Heller, 2003, p. 7).

visual communication outcomes or processes as things outside the scope, role and meaning of graphic design, even claiming sometimes it's the end of design altogether.²⁹

Operating precisely within different contexts, outside of the normal design situations, opened up the questions: are these “magazines, signs for streets, posters, logotypes” products or producers of the discipline of graphic design? Is it because they can function as containers, able to be scaled up and reproduced in different circumstances, places and put together by different groups, thereby propagating through time and space as a ‘kind’ of design work, that we have a discipline? That by making them we can call ourselves graphic designers? What is the purpose of graphic design in a given situation, to make a catalogue, a magazine, a campaign...? Do we design catalogues, signs for streets, leaflets, because they are part of the discipline, or because they specifically emerged useful and relevant in relation to the problematic and the communities we encountered?

Precisely because ‘I’ found ‘myself’ without a discipline when designing happened with real people through engaging with real issues, that we turned to observe how having these artefacts as a mindset posed an obstacle for the social turn. In real situations of designing with people they were failures to “acknowledge and address the central role of graphic design as a shaper of the visual environment.” (Poynor, 2011, p. 287) In this view, we approach space from the existential plane of being in designing together with people (similar to CODE) and how that environment potentially opened up our visual communication design habits and expectations to possible transformation.

2. Diffuse design context

Unlike other countries, where documented design practices and approaches multiply (Ericson and Mazé, 2011), little is known and reported about socially engaged design in Portugal.³⁰ Social initiatives and projects spread across the country addressing diverse issues in urban and rural settings, although, only very few assume design is one of the participant disciplines worth relevant to mention, and even less designers appear as or among the group of initiators.

Instead of a consolidated practice we can speak of a social trend that is geographically diffuse and conceptually vague because in the diversity of projects and issues

²⁹ In an magazine article called “It's the end of graphic design as we know it”, design critic Rick Poynor (2008) argues graphic design is a practice embedded within “industry-determined modes and standards”, hence its task is to shape graphic form and in that “[b]y all means involve the client – hasn't a good client relationship always been the goal of sensitive designers?” (Poynor, 2008). Recognizing that visual communication is not “the exclusive province of graphic designers as a professional group”, Poynor articulates that what goes other directions is outside the scope, role and meaning of graphic design.

³⁰ See: Coxito, 2013; Martins, 2013; Vasconcelos, 2011.

addressed – preservation of local heritage and culture, people employment and empowerment, urban qualification and rehabilitation, urban agriculture and permaculture, exchange of services, competences or capabilities – the role of design varies from being strictly specific to being present in the whole process determining all aspects of the project. Because it is difficult to ascertain whether and how design can play a more or less conscious role within social projects, this is a scenario where a more useful idea than social design is the “citizen designer”. Drawing from Antony Dunne (Brändle, 2008), instead of a unified community-of-practice the word “citizen” highlights the movements of design individuals to engage practically and ideologically with contemporary issues. Moreover, it highlights the activist turn³¹ to intervene into people’s lives and work directly with “diffuse designers”, or what François Jégou and Ezio Manzini (2008) describe as the “creative communities” whose projects and interventions already act on behalf of alternative democratic and/or sustainable ways of living.

While our fellow colleagues from GESTUAL experienced some of the same surprising and unexpected situations and with whom we have shared and explored some of the research concerns, questions and perspectives accounted in this thesis, our spatial critique is not a criticism of urban studies and approaches. This research represents our way of becoming citizen designers therefore it can comment on the Portuguese context as a diffuse space where alternatives do take place and possibility. Last but not least, the discussions with our supervision team about the role of design education to determine contextual design opportunities or limitations enabled the perception of this thesis as one possible means of talking back to diffuse conditions of becoming socially engaged without pretending to transform the design context in Portugal rather to assumedly present it in a different way. Recognizing the issue and exploring how design futures are closely tied with the ways students becomes designers (across all levels) and learn to become critical thinkers of their own work and cultures of designing, afforded opportunities to articulate our empirical work with design education that were fruitful to this design research. Moreover, experiencing working with design students and teaching design were part of the whole envisioning and performing the design discipline anew or in different social ways.

31 See Markussen (2011) and Faud-Luke (2009) for two perspectives on Design Activism.

Historical

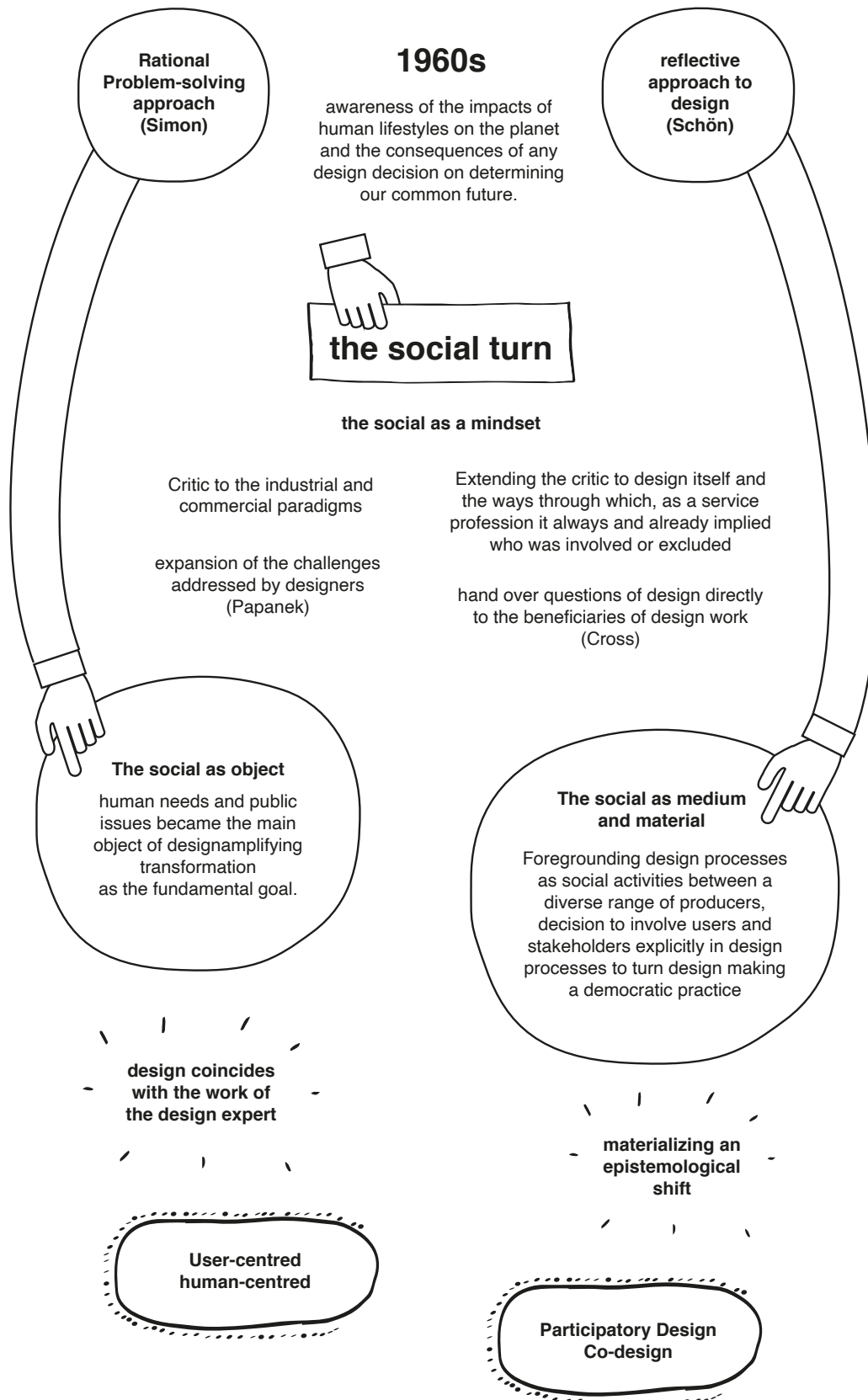


Diagram 1. Summarising the social turn

Contemporary

design coincides
with the work of
the design expert

the scenario is:

materializing an
epistemological
shift

**Participatory Design and Co-design
spread to all kinds of purposes.
An extensive body of literature exists
motivations, methods and approaches
to involve users and stakeholders in
design processes (Sanders)**

problem-based
solution oriented design
defined by the motivations of
practitioners (Koskinen)
and the tools and
methods it uses (Manzini;
Campbell et al).

Is social design
a thing?

**social design
design for social change
design for social impact
transformation design
design for social innovation
design for social innovation & sustainability**

Difficulties to become
socially engaged

pressing issue about
how designers themselves
participate or become involved
in other's initiatives.

ambiguous practice where
questions of 'how' are not
separate from questions of
'where' and 'who' designing
takes place to determine
'what' transformations to
address and unfold (Mazé)

when design is commissioned
to support social initiatives that
take place through the
exchanges and networks of
diverse participants, namely
institutions and communities,
the role of the design expert is
not obvious (Manzini)

designers find themselves
without knowing what to
project, therefore,
experience themselves
without a discipline
(Bremner and Rodgers)

An expansion of 'where'
and 'who' that happens to
design when it becomes
social (Mazé)

tangles of "solutionism
and participationism"
where either design
expertise dominates or
completely vanishes

social design
require experts a
long-commitment and to
be highly disciplinary

Diagram 2. Summarising the contemporary debates

The issue appears to be...

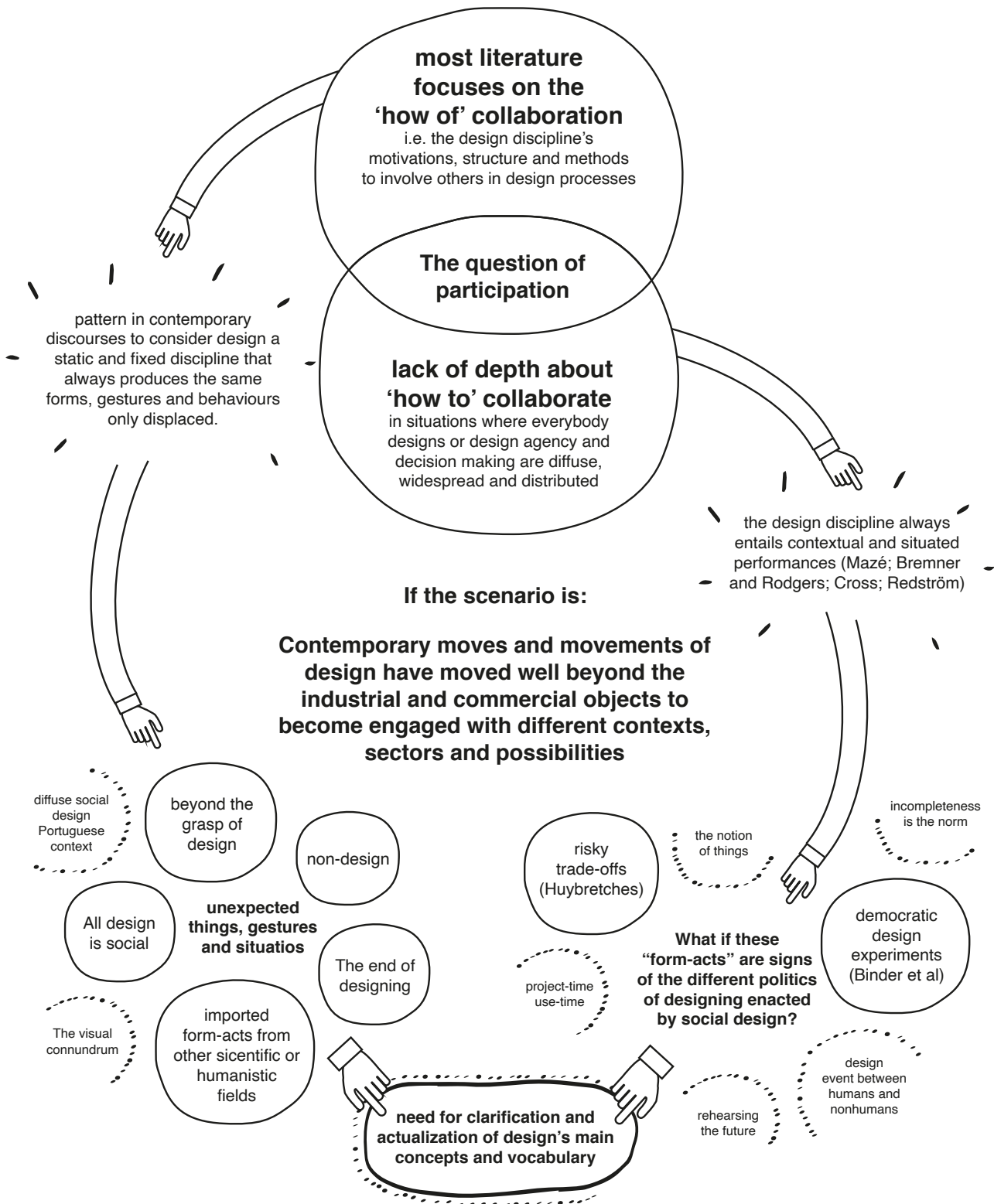


Diagram 3. The focus of this research.

Research objectives and hypothesis

2.3 Encountering indiscipline: the beginning of design

This PhD thesis set off to study principles and practices of social design by exploring how designers work through a mindful social ethos and activist practice. Aiming to build an archive of approaches and socially engaged projects and practitioners, we began by looking at the main terms that have emerged to discursively articulate social design. From the analysis of how practitioners describe ‘what’ they do and ‘how’ they work a “spectrum of action” was discerned whistling three main tendencies: 1) practices related with “survival” and urgent needs in contexts of extreme poverty, lack of basic living conditions or rights, or contexts of catastrophe; 2) practices articulating “citizenship” and the rights of every individual and community to change and to create her/his/their own change 3) and practices of engaging the “politics” of things, when designers work directly with institutions and organisations that precisely influence, shape and decide the norms through which individuals and communities live by economically, socially, and environmentally (Veiga and Almendra, 2014). In these practices, designers not only focus on micro problematics but bridge between macro scale changes and challenges. This spectrum made visible that the way designers articulate social matters in practice was in tune with how authors addressed “social innovation” in and by design. Moving onwards to better understand our familiar context, we did a first and formal research experiment. In this experiment, something unexpected happened that changed the course of this research.

Between March and June 2015, “citizen designer cidadão” was an invitation to 3rd year Design students in the teaching unit of “Service Design”, to research and document practices of social design in Portugal, or social initiatives wherein design performed an active and/or conscious function or role. Entering a particularly diffuse field, looking out for expert designers as if not the makers, at least, participating or playing a role in social initiatives (Huybrechts et al., 2014), the students selected five projects. Group A, chose the project “Cacifos Solidários” coordinated by the organization ACA – Associação Conversa Amiga and architect Duarte Paiva. Group B chose the doctoral research project of design researcher Rita Maldonado “Communication design for Alzheimer’s disease” in the University of Aveiro. The Groups C and D followed the designer Susana António, whereas Group C focused on a project she had developed some years ago called “Pick

it”, and Group D engaged her undergoing collaboration with psychologist Ângelo Capota in the project “A Avó veio trabalhar”. And finally, Group E choose to know more about the social work of a non-profit organization, “Dress for success”, in which design did not play any formal role but the initiative articulated a real social service.³² Through a toolkit designed to support fieldwork, the students had to meet and interview the respective protagonists and photograph the places, the work and things themselves and the protagonists considered relevant. While reporting on events to both the teacher and the researcher, who followed up and advised on their journey,³³ each group built their own experiences. After a research phase, and for the rest of the semester, the experiment interweaved the assignment that had been given to the entire class: designing a service proposal in relation to a concrete issue of the group’s own choosing. This was an open assignment where the definition of the problem was not given but part of the challenge. Whereas the students outside the experiment were designing service proposals that responded to concerns related with academic or school life, the “citizen designer cidadão” groups were generating service proposals from within the encounters with the social initiatives and how these unfolded. On the day of the final presentations a curious thing happened. While most of the groups modelled the experiences in terms of application of traditional design knowledge, Group E expressed something unexpected. In response to the question “did you change your perspective about what is social design?”

Student A: “— Definitely, we think we did change our view. We have been discussing, and funny... we started with all those usual questions of what is design, what do we like, what are we used to do, and what have we learned. And we think because we’re still attached to the school we thought about social design as the concrete thing, the aesthetic, the functional, the communication, the design we do everyday... But with this project we realized that design can be kind of organizational. That it’s kind of strategic too. We can opt for and adjust certain strategies to improve all these predicaments and institutions. It’s not just this work in the computer...”

Then another colleague adds:

Student C: “— It’s more of a living thing.”³⁴

32 See Appendix A: Citizen Designer Cidadão case file.

33 The “Service Design” unit follows Donald Schön’s (1983, p. 79) model of the “design studio” in which “students undertake a design project under the supervision of a master designer” (Schön, 1983, p. 79) which means the educational model is “characterized by learning-by-doing, coaching rather than teaching, and a dialogue of reciprocal reflection-in-action between teacher and student” (A.telier 2011, p. 9).

34 From the original in Portuguese language:

A: — Sim nós achamos que acabamos por ter mudado um bocado. Nós estivemos a discutir, engraçado, também... claro começamos com aquelas perguntas frequentes do que é o design, o que é que nós gostamos, o que estamos mais habituados, o que é que nós damos. E nós achamos que também por estarmos muito na questão da faculdade ligamos muito o design social à coisa estética, partilhámos a mesma opinião que era o facto de para nós era, lá está, a coisa concreta, o estético o funcional, a comunicação, o próprio design que nós trabalhamos hoje em dia. Mas com este projeto percebemos que o design também acaba por ser um bocado organizacional, acaba por ser um bocado estratégico também. Nós podemos optar e adaptar certas estratégias para melhorar todos estes funcionamentos, estas instituições. Não é só esta própria construção de computador...

C: — “é uma coisa mais viva”.

Upon hearing the expression, we began to think that something might have happened to the students. “It’s a more living thing” brought the impression of an experience wherein design became “undisciplined” (Bremner and Rodgers, 2013). Although the paradox of becoming transformed by the context of ‘where’ and ‘with whom’ (beyond the expert) it was practiced and simultaneously emerging recognizable as the discipline and not something else, we began to wonder whether it was a sign of “the in-discipline of design” (Gentes, 2017).

2.3.1. The in-discipline of design: reading Annie Gentes

In her book “The In-Discipline of Design: Bridging the Gap Between Humanities and Engineering”, Information and Communication Science scholar Annie Gentes (2017) explores the concept of “in-discipline” as “the episteme of design as an aesthetic of conception.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 214)

Departing from an understanding of Design as a media related, meaning and form making activity, Gentes defines the discipline as a practice of “conception”, in which, to invent a new thing is to *conceive*, in the sense of making, planning or projecting in anticipation a radical unknown. What sets Design apart from other disciplines of invention is, for Gentes, a fundamentally “generative” quality that shows how participants to design something also create this poetical space of expansion where that tangible unknown is explored (Gentes, 2017, p. 131).

In attempts to achieve a pragmatic approach to the discipline of design Gentes (2017) focuses her analysis on the designed objects and the actors’ activities in interdisciplinary situations of design/conception. Using hybrid methods inspired by the humanities and social sciences, the author does participative observation of situations of interdisciplinary designing, in-depth interviews to protagonists, and reads corpuses and documents that account institutional and political rationales for generative practice and interdisciplinary research and work. Describing the design of new artefacts through the discursive productions of design either linguistic, iconic, tangible, and their role in design/conception, Gentes is able to “see how designers base their work on an analysis of activities, a better understanding of their users, a careful understanding of complex social situations.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 4)

To better understand the theory of design as an “in-discipline”, we unfold Gentes’ perspective in two directions.

Design as a practice of conception, describes a situation in which heterogeneous disciplines are “composed” together in order to design something, who and which would otherwise produce nothing on their own (Gentes, 2017, p. 159). For Gentes, designing is an experience akin to a:

““a field of tensions” where the main skill is not so much to manage a series of steps but to “compose” with different elements and properties to unfix views and challenge knowledge, and eventually to generate new coherent situations.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 136)

For the author, before design performs as a practice based on production, it occurs as a space where research and invention interweave and become interchangeable parts of the same process (Gentes, 2017, p. 233). The word “tension” describes the fact that heterogeneous knowledges are brought together to destabilize and go beyond individual and collective preconceptions, therefore, what occurs, she argues, is an “expansion of knowledge” that is outside the “discourse of bringing more, or adding more to already known fields,” rather it “links generativity (defined as the potential to produce something new) to the question of under-determination”. (Gentes, 2017, p. 220) According to Gentes, “under-determination” consists in “subtracting from what is already known” (Gentes, 2017, p. 220). It’s by removing characteristics from the objects of the different knowledges, separating them from their original contexts and exposing them to a the a condition of socialization that possibilities for invention are revealed, in other words, that a “design space” opens up. As the author argues:

“situations of invention are based on the destabilization of disciplines by removing some of their tenets. In other words, invention is made possible because some design space opens up. Design epistemology is related to this operation of under-determination of a discipline by another.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 218)

Gentes notes that “at the time of the invention, we do not totally know which elements of the disciplines will be displaced or discarded” (Gentes, 2017, p. 221). In expansion, or better in “in-discipline”, design is: “not so much action or passion (or aesthetics) but representation and interpretation and the tools to do so [...]. The challenge is no longer efficiency, or pleasure but literacy.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 82) Engaged in socialization to design something not yet known, disciplines:

“discuss definitions and come up with new concepts because they have to work with non-knowledge. [...] The questioning and expansive nature of things is both related to their conceptualization but also to the fact that they are remediated in multiple situations and audiences. Their inconclusiveness is not just linguistic (in other word it is not a question of solving a stated problem) it is media related. The plan of “things” is a plan of multiple media: objects, discourses, images, activities.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 236)

In this scenario, “literacy” corresponds to the articulation of different sensible abilities to recognise the inscriptions, that is to say the signs, that one needs to

perceive something as a coherent thing (Gentes, 2017, p. 83). Therefore, it means the capacity to “read” the meanings of things in context implying that:

“[e]very new media challenges these skills and “new literacies” develop. Media literacies or trans-literacies consist not only in reading and writing but include the ability to recognize and choose relevant media according to task, or to switch from one media to another and follow the diversity of meanings.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 83)

When things have “properties but (as yet) no identity”, Gentes proposes to call them “integrative things” (Gentes, 2017, p. 220). In an expanded way of thinking about means’ and ends’ relations in the making between disciplines, “integrative things” function as devices to beget tangible something that is still unknown and not yet a final product (Gentes, 2017, p. 220). The value of the tangible material and visual productions in the process, according to Gentes, “depends on whether and how they contribute to the expansion of the technology, field, or project, for various audiences and participants.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 108)

Simultaneously these things are a kind of poetic “condensation” because their purpose is to explore the meaning of an invention while fusing or channelling many aspects of an issue into a single and concrete whole (2017, p. 131). In Gentes’ words:

“[b]ecause they condense so many possibilities, these words and images also trigger a powerful process of interpretation that continues the process of invention while the object is being socialized. Condensation as a poetic practice is supported by an extremely difficult process of reduction, choice, redefinition. (Gentes, 2017, p. 131)

The socialization of heterogeneous disciplines that sparks under-determination, therefore a reduction of what composes each of them, simultaneously uses their removed components as a basis for their integration into new or unexpected compositions or transient integrative things. Condensation operates, as Gentes argues, to:

“organize a whole world view which, on the one hand, narrows the interpretive options since it structures a precise view of the activity, but, on the other hand, offers a probable future with a great variety of details that all offer handles for memories (of other narratives, objects, situations) and projections of new applications and circumstances.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 131)

One pivotal concept that helps bring disciplines together, according to Gentes is for instance “the allegory of the user” (Gentes, 2017, p. 62). Accounting

pluridisciplinary practices oriented towards the engineering and production of new technologies, the author describes:

“how the design process includes several “figures” of the user. These figures are poetic productions, and indirect representations of different models of real users: one who manipulates technologies to act, as well as an aesthete and a reflective individual. The objective is to obtain a richer view of the “users” and to engage in a debate on how they form a complex system with our objects.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 18)

“Advancing the needs of the user”, she argues, is not only an ultimate aim of design processes. In the encounter between different disciplines and stakeholders, it functions as another technique of socialization that can stage the unknown by “carrying values that contribute to the imagination of the technology. But the narrative requirements also project the technique in the users’ hands, already incorporating it in the users’ lives.” (Gentes, 2017, p.122) In this sense, the allegory of the user is, for Gentes, an “expansive fiction” because:

“the different facets of the “users” could not be reduced to their needs. Epistemologically speaking it meant that there could be no social or natural “reductionism”. There was no technological determinism either. Working on the “user” meant that disciplines changed a number of their concepts: from user to spectator, from gesture to reading/writing/narrating...” (Gentes, 2017, p.122)

The “allegory of the user” as an extremely condensed form of poetic production is “expansive” because it works as an “in-discipline”. The logic of conception behind the “integrative things” is the same as that which happens to disciplines when they redeploy, in different ways, a diversity of meanings to the integrative things (products, logos, names, words, concepts, materials) which stand for a variety of “signified” therefore for possible vast connotations and further things (Gentes, 2017, p. 131).

The plane of design conception based on a generative dynamic of deconstruction and composition of disciplines, is what Gentes calls the “in-discipline of design” which so far shows that “[d]esigning is fundamentally multidisciplinary because it creates new things in and between disciplines that transform their original concepts and methods.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 238) A crucial point, however, is that this plane according to Gentes is autonomous. While it is connected to social experience it simultaneously frames a generic *social space* where “not only the different elements of the design situation but also the different disciplines are freed from their epistemological determinism and can therefore under-determine each other.” (2017, p. 236) Even though conception is a design space, Gentes argues, it

is an “indiscipline” for it does not depend on design expertise to occur.³⁵ This is the reason we chose to draw a second understanding of the “in-discipline of design” because Gentes contends that “design/practice” as the “body of knowledge, practices, objects, and the way they are taught in schools and exercised by professionals” is emblematic of design/conception (Gentes, 2017, p. 240). Design as an independent discipline, she argues, “borrows and modifies concepts and methods from other disciplines as well as develops its own.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 213) Indiscipline is at the core of design as an autonomous knowledge practice because, according to Gentes, designers not only induce questions and problematics from analysing existing situations, while simultaneously deducing conclusions through prototyping and verifying hypothesis, they also engage in the semiotic process of “projective abduction” (Gentes, 2017, p. 136). As the author explains:

““projective abductive processes” organize the whole composition activity. Abduction proper is a semiotic practice that brings to the forefront unforeseen connections out of a diversity of elements. What I call “projective abduction” is a semiotic practice that builds a world to be. Hence, tensions are solved in the new composition.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 136)

The term “composition” means for Gentes “the careful gathering and ordering of elements that, through projective abduction, build up new knowledge out of new artifacts.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 175) If design is a generative practice that consists of looking for clues and making unusual connections through tensions and compositions (Gentes, 2017, p. 162), then, the author argues, “[u]nderstanding the designer’s activity is therefore to recognize that it is not limited to adjusting the systems to an activity but that it is also defined by the ability to play with norms, whether moral, social, or aesthetic.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 81) In this sense, design is an “in-discipline” itself wherein “design practitioners, [...] not only do they use multiple disciplines to create an X, they actually organize a deconstruction of disciplines.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 238)

Blurring the two understandings, all designing frames a social situation, all designing is and happens in the confrontation and tension between disparate/discrete things: whether bodies, ideas, materials, concepts, among or between each other; as an in-discipline. The notion helps Gentes to demonstrate that “[t]here is more to the research activity than just a plan of optimization of means towards an end, and a social distribution of roles. [...] allocating power to actors or actants, or tracing how means are aligned and strategically used” (Gentes, 2017, p. 241) That research is fundamentally an act of invention because putting the emphasis

³⁵ “[t]he under-determination of disciplines does not depend on one discipline only, even though design/practice as a discipline is emblematic of the process of under-determination. I would argue that design/conception is an in-discipline and that it manifests itself strongly in design/practice.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 241)

“on design, i.e. conception, and second on disciplines themselves rather than their objects” (p. 219), it becomes a matter of tensions and evolving compositions when ‘what’ to know or to project “is yet to be given, or is questioned, when the identity is unknown or challenged, and assumptions are wide open or contested” (p. 6). Rather than “managerial” or “linear” planning, Gentes argues, design/conception is “about beginnings: how people start thinking about something that they cannot yet name, how they try to foretell the future of their work, how they plan the first steps of their invention, how they involve different stakeholders in a debate.” (p. 6) As Gentes argues:

“While the discussions about inter-trans or multi-disciplinarity tend to describe the modes of knowledge circulation, it is important to observe how these movements give rise to a new “thing”.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 218)

By observing these movements precisely, indiscipline emerges for the author as a new aesthetics, thereby disclosing another model of design as a spatial “composition” in alternative to the chronological model of design as a “project”. As Gentes explains, design performed as a “project” is based on an “inductive/deductive methodological structure” that organises actions of making and integrative things into chronological sequence. In a way, ideas and observations function as hypothesis that are tested and then confirmed by the designed object (Gentes, 2017, p. 162), which articulates a “managerial model of design where linear time rules design organization as a sequence of events, and where each activity feeds the next one.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 159) In contrast, “the model of design as a composition of tensions puts in the forefront abductive methods.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 162) It situates invention not only in the circulating knowledge/things between participants but in the destabilization of participants themselves, when forced to question their own objects and paradigms in relation to each other and the things in place, a “design space” opens up (Gentes, 2017, p. 220). This “design space”, for Gentes, is a topological plane of conception that by bridging “bridges different knowledge bases, power stakes, and aesthetics, so as to produce a new composition” (Gentes, 2017, p. 137) make visible how the “field of tensions” works as both a disruptive force and a way of reorganizing knowledge (Gentes, 2017, p. 220). To understand “in-discipline” as a new aesthetic of design, Gentes claims, we need to switch from the chronological construct and focus on “the elements in presence, in the situation, where all the actors living and nonliving are being composed to beget a new unknown.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 159) Therefore, “we need to understand design from a spatial perspective” (Gentes, 2017, p. 244) to grasp the material (knowledge), temporal (future) and literacy (media) “expansion” that occurs when heterogeneous things or disciplines meet, moreover to understand the “how two seemingly divergent creative activities, one

of deconstruction, the other of composition, can be regarded as a poetic effort to create new forms of coherence.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 236) The spatial model of design, for Gentes, gives a complementary view of design processes in the way it affords a matrix to understand the fact that design is a plan of multiple media, situations and audiences, therefore a fundamentally social space of conception based on socialization and the in-discipline of all thing and participants.

2.3.2. The social turn is the beginning of design

The twofold perspective of the “in-discipline of design” articulated by Gentes, frames in our view a macro and micro conceptualization of design politics that hold similarities to the distinctions between design and co-design as two different social experiences of designing in contemporary debates (chapters 2.2). In the first, design can be described as a co-design situation wherein “in-discipline” corresponds to the “pluri-disciplinary” encounter and process of conception that may or may not involve design experts (Gentes, 2017, p. 238-240). Designing here is a macro social and communicative activity between different humans and nonhumans that challenges the frontiers and territories of their situated knowledges as they engage in producing/making something together. The experience these participants have and the practice they perform, expert and non-expert alike, is akin to design as an autonomous discipline, although the political dimension is amplified in how disciplines become under-determined and brought together as new compositions of ‘we’ in the “field of tensions” (Gentes, 2017; Mazé, 2014). In the second perspective, “in-discipline” occurs in the micro level of design whose core doing as a discipline is fundamentally based on the deconstruction or literal “indiscipline” of things to produce something that emerges as a composition of improbable encounters between heterogeneous matters, knowledges, materials, technologies, ideas, meanings, textures, tools (Gentes, 2017, p. 136). The focal point here is the design gesture itself which holds a political (abductive) force, as both “tension and composition”, that is able to disrupt, look at the reorganization of, and integrate things on the same act. The poetic practice of “condensation” operates through a macropolitical formulation which is embedded in the micro gesture working as a goal or horizon to orient the expansions of knowledge that same gesture generates. Describing indiscipline as a practice of collaboration in a macro view and a practice of composition in the micro performance of design as a discipline, indiscipline is fundamentally a social process based on tensions and compositions that emerge in the encounter between different bodies, elements, objects, etc.

The social turn in the ‘citizen designer cidadão’ experiment was approached as an expansion of the challenges addressed by the design students. The work of

design coincided with the work of the students (as design experts in the situation) since involving participants to design was not mandatory. Nevertheless, it entailed an extension of “where” research took place by having to meet and know the initiatives’ people and environments.

Once design had turned into a more living thing, however, the question arises if the experience had gone beyond a matter of finding ‘what to project’ and return to the school to begin designing. Going out of the university to meet with others could have triggered an expansion of “who” designs when *there* emerged, we can speculate, an understanding that it could only be by *being together* that any relevant issues might be raised and become tangible.³⁶ Meeting with others could have opened up a “design space” between the students and the makers of the initiatives beyond pure research. Allowing design to become an in-discipline, therefore the students emerged transformed. The social turn became the beginning of design and the expression tentatively represented the “expansion of knowledge” that occurs in the “under-determination” that is experienced by participants in co-design (Gentes, 2017).

Through the new aesthetics afforded by Gentes we were making clear some dimensions of what is social about design and how design becomes social. The anecdote of seeing design as a more living thing precisely pointed to recognize that research is part of design as a space of conception whether in micro and macro degrees of intervention, just like Gentes argues. Furthermore, it pointed to something more crucial for this thesis that “in-discipline” does not mean the dissolution of disciplines, including design, but accounts a space of socialization that besides transforming (conceiving or designing) things can indeed transform participants.

³⁶ This understanding might have required participants to question everything that appeared to be given in the encounter, and still not give up, but make something with it. See Johanna Gullberg (2015) and her reflection on the transformative learning of architecture students engaging theater studies.

2.4 Transforming practices from within: indiscipline as hypothesis

Intrigued by the view of design as a more living thing, we turned the attention to our own work. Set about to become socially engaged designers, we went on a journey to transform our professional activity. Engaging in complex social arenas and political environments, with GESTUAL, CODE and other groups and individuals, the interest was to work directly with experienced actors and activists in the field of social issues – namely social workers, anthropologists, architects, urban planners, and artists – and to experience what it was like to design with communities of users and citizens for real. Although all engagements began with a commission to design a specific visual communication output or an invitation to become the graphic designer of the project, our care and attention were always directed to everything we did besides and beyond the habitual roles and approaches of our single discipline. From mounting workshops, public space events and festivals to just spending time with people to discuss issues, learn about different skills, or co-design specific products or interventions, we encountered communities living in suburban areas with whom we intentionally engaged to handle situated challenges and design things relationally.

Similarly, to the words of the students (see chapter 2.3), in every co-design engagement there were specific gestures, actions and relations that occurred to destabilize our disciplines. Taking notice to what happened more specifically to graphic design, those situations provoked the unexpected effect of not doing away with the discipline nor its specific visual communication modes and abilities. Instead, by means of doing visual things, the forms and ways of graphic design emerged integrated in those unfamiliar gestures and actions of the people in response to our ‘expert’ doings. Graphic design turned into a more living thing, still, witnessing conventional patterns become different situations and events through the diffuse designers in place, the paradox was that those same situations and events simultaneously enveloped the expert visual communication toolbox and background.

Before Gentes (2017), our first encounter with “indiscipline” occurred with Michel Foucault (1995) and his account of the episode of *La Phalange* in the book “Discipline and Punishment”. The episode describes the trial of a homeless and orphan child wherein:

“[a]ll the illegalities that the court defined as offences the accused reformulated as the affirmation of a living force: the lack of a home as vagabondage, the lack of a master as independence, the lack of work as freedom, the lack of a timetable as the fullness of days and nights. [...] He prefers liberty; what does he care if others see it as disorder?” (Foucault, 1995, pp. 290-292)

Approaching acts of delinquency “not as monstrosities, but as the fatal return and revolt of what is repressed”, Foucault (1995, p. 290) regards “indiscipline” as the manifestation of an inalienable right: the right to disorder the order of ‘civilised’ liberty as a true act of ‘open’ liberty. In the author’s perspective when “[c]onfronted with discipline on the face of the law, there is illegality, which puts itself forward as a right; it is indiscipline, rather than the criminal offence, that causes the rupture.” (Foucault, 1995, p. 291)

The implication that, rather than offence, indiscipline is a right based on democratic possibilities of mounting a criticism from within, our practical moves towards the social were an expression of this right to disorder the order of disciplines that was always and already implicit in the foundation of this thesis. This journey was personal, hence probably a risk to be taken for a rigorous and objective object of study, and ran in parallel to what we considered to be the formal design research to better understand social design and systematically frame a set of principles for mounting socially engaged design practices exploring how *other* designers work. Until we began to think more thoroughly through Foucault’s notion of “indiscipline” and question the latent potential: what if the undisciplined moments we have experienced were in fact manifestations of graphic design becoming transformed in and through the encounter with others?

Problematizing whether the dismissal of graphic design, beyond personal agendas, was due to the historical pattern of recognizing in these moves the end of graphic design (see 2.2), we began to speculate whether the gestures, actions or relations which apparently came to disrupt the discipline, precisely instead of disorder, could be latent possibilities which had not yet had permission to exist although were possible but not yet experienced. Amplifying indiscipline as an ability to play with norms, whether political, social, or aesthetic, with Foucault we began to look into the events enquiring: is this graphic design in its everyday performance? Is this graphic design discipline manifested in unknown ways? Or are these signs of social design – as a thing – beyond the conventional disciplines?

Encountering “the indiscipline of design” developed by Gentes (2017) in the meantime we began to formally conjecture that graphic design might be a possible and legitimate departure point for enacting socially engaged practices because all the visual communication otherness experienced could be seen as signs of the in-discipline of design. Still the perspective of Foucault afforded something else which expanded our understanding of the notion of indiscipline with potentials that marked the course of this thesis.

2.4.1. The expansion of design in the encounter with others

The understanding of indiscipline developed by Gentes (2017) reframes design from a spatial perspective. When a group of disciplines gather together to design an X, interactions bring into being a design space. This design space, in Gentes argument, takes place as a generative process of conception which consists aesthetically in spacing appearance³⁷ of multiple tensions and compositions between disciplines towards the appearance of the final X. In this view, Gentes argues that generativity or the potential to produce something new is linked with “under-determination”. That is to say, it happens not in the social gathering of disciplines *per se* but in the individual subtraction of bits and pieces of knowledge, – therefore in a process of in-discipline that occurs when and because they are together, – that are put together in a space to become designed. In other words, design is an expansive practice in the ways multiple compositions can be made/ designed with the subtracted elements in place, which can also change in the process of socialization and subtraction between disciplines. From this spatial construct perspective, indiscipline is not only an activity that destabilizes or “under-determines” disciplines it is also a doing that *extends* the design space into further indiscipline. That is to say, it extends designing as further designing, spacing the appearance of tangible integrative things external to participants to constitute the X or outcome of their encounter.

The indiscipline afforded by Foucault puts emphasis on the social gathering of disciplines *per se* shifting from seeing design as a space of tensions and composition towards seeing design as a performance of those tensions and compositions. This slight yet crucial different reveals the transformations that occur to participants therefore the event of designing itself as an encounter depended on how disciplines

37 To make this clear, we draw the distinction between “spaces” and “spacing” from Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou (2013). In respect to political upheavals in the public space, the authors distinguish between two different topologies of action that aim transformation: “spaces of appearance” and “spacing appearance”. The first refers the “spaces” in Hannah Arendt’s formulation that are “brought into being through political action” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 71). Those, public or private spaces, that become sites or containers for the opening of “intervals” in the social and political fabric, or “public sphere”, that is, for “spacing appearance”. According to the authors, “spacing appearance” refers the acts of “re-crafting one’s crafted condition”, which literally “take space” from within regulatory schemas and established practices (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 71). The potential in public aggregations, they argue, is that these do actually happen – they are possible, not just a potentially. Therefore: “the notion of space should by no means be taken as synonymous with fixity, but rather implies a performative plane of “taking place.” In this sense, “appearance” is not reducible to a surface phenomenality; rather it opens up to concern what is performed in ways that avow the unperformable.” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 194) In other words, “spacing appearance” is a doing that exposes other politics, different identities or alternative ways of being because when these appear in space “to displace the “public sphere,” or the polis, understood as the particular spatial location of political life”, they are present as an appearance which signals that difference is conceivable because it is already there happening (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 194).

interact with each other, thereby possibly expanding their limits or boundaries to include their opposites. The episode of *La Phalange* postulates that indiscipline does not grow from confrontation rather from attention to another way of being. The child is a disruption because it denies or is contrary to discipline. Although, the child disrupts not by being different but by the fact that his difference is not just a potentiality but a real possibility that exists. Understanding indiscipline as an expansion, drawing from Gentes, it lies in the recognition of the child as a different material and ideological manifestation of the discipline itself – a difference from within – that was always and already possible although not yet seen. In the encounter with the child as an opposite, a landscape of possibilities opens up for discipline, because indiscipline expands the discipline's boundaries and possibilities for what it can be or become.

The notion of indiscipline afforded by Foucault in relation to that of Gentes, comes to clarify how a design space is not a generic plane that is separate from the social experience that brings it into being. If we can see the situation described by Foucault as a design space, the encounter between participants is founded on institutionalized hierarchies and social conventions. Yet simultaneously those preconceived ideas about who is discipline and who is not, who is inside or outside the norm, become an open question. The encounter enables a momentary lift from the usual politics to articulate a *different* politics that is based on, drawing from Gentes, a spatial negotiation of hierarchies, of who has the knowledge to make decisions and influence what things are conceived and how. The fact that one is discipline and the other is not, is not a fact that is granted but a social under-determination and re-composition of the here and now. In this sense, the design space articulates a different social experience of designing. For design to happen it requires participants an ongoing re-crafting of one's own condition with and through others. Drawing attention to how these relate to each other in order to bring design into being, Foucault shifts the focus from the 'how of design', that is the indiscipline of Gentes, towards the 'how to design', pointing that therein lies the opening of disciplines and of design itself manifested and performed in different ways.

Shifting from the spatial construct to the experiential construct, our way of engaging, seeing and understanding indiscipline expanded and became slightly different from that of Gentes.

Through the experiential lens, generativity is directly linked to the encounter, for there is no such thing as diffuse designers and expert designers, but a *live* performance of design that grows from and is dependent on how participants relate and interact with each other in order to design. To make it clear, if design is a social space that can be articulated by others who are not design experts, as Gentes argues, we can question whether non-design situations which are emblematic of design

practice can be considered *real* design situations that account for how design is an expanded discipline that contains several other/unknown and probably unexpected or opposed ways of designing things. In other words, we can hypothesize that these different practices can be part of design if considered not emblematic, as Gentes does, but as an expansion of the design discipline in the encounter with others. Contrary to non-design or the end of designing, indiscipline can evidence design gestures, actions or relations performed in expanded and unknown ways, therefore it potentially enacts the practices and situations wherein designing is performed socially engaged well beyond convention. With Foucault, therefore, we came to see indiscipline as spacing appearance of multiple possibilities of the design discipline itself seen through how it could potentially emerge, instead or before subtraction,³⁸ socially transformed in the encounter with others. Therefore, how it is an expanded discipline with under-explored properties and probably unknown qualities by the ways other disciplines can design in different, distorted and altered designerly ways of designing.

2.4.2 All design is social but not all design is social design: indiscipline as hypothesis

Owing to a dismiss of the discipline of graphic design in order to experience different processes and events, the undisciplined moments were not recognized so far beyond mere accidents or contextual effects experienced naturally from within complex social situations. Coming back to the professional engagements with a different look, however, we moved towards seeing how all participants, expert and non-expert, acted in relation to each other to become visible, make things visually perceptible or communicate things visually, hence, how they became experientially present and participated from within a common graphic design space. Through Gentes lens, we saw visual communication and representation, beyond fixed and systematic tasks performed by the graphic design expert, turn into interactive doings between the diverse human and non-human participants in place. But when graphic design was directly confronted by how people enacted, used or produced visual communication, graphic design as a discipline became expanded in the way what we conceived as non-discipline actually contributed to determine graphic design's limits and potentials in the situation. Seeing through the lens of Foucault that the disruption of patterns does not grow from denial and neglect, we began to question how graphic design could be manifesting through

³⁸ Perhaps, we can speculate, that before subtraction, or what is subtracted from disciplines, comes first from a confrontation with itself that happens by the encounter with the others, which reveal what the discipline is not but also what it can potentially be. Therefore, this confrontation, as an indiscipline, expands the field of possibilities for subtraction, before these are excluded from composition which are based on the subtracted parts, not the whole of disciplines.

a constellation of unexpected others and whether that signalled an experience of visual communication within the discipline but performed in different ways. Instead of expressing conventional micro or macro processes of design, the indiscipline of graphic design emerged as the moments or situations when and where design became a more living thing. This thought changed the course of this research.

Examining social design in order to become social designers turned into a profoundly liberatory and contestatory exploration of moments and situations of indiscipline experienced in the efforts to transform graphic design by immersion in interdisciplinary making and hybrid forms of design. With an eye to what graphic design had been before indiscipline, it was indiscipline that moved us towards the prospective insight that we can perform graphic design in different ways.³⁹ Instead of finding ourselves without a discipline,⁴⁰ indiscipline evidences an expansion of graphic design's possibilities in the encounter with others in the sense that design itself can become transformed by the ways others, non-designers, can enact and perform visual communication differently. Rather than changing our practice by doing away with the discipline, we argue in this thesis that we have experienced other, unknown or under-explored kinds of design being literally performed together with communities and places postulating an expansion of design's possibilities in its practical and social dimensions. In this view, insights and visions have emerged from the field to generate the hypothesis that:

all design is social but not all design is social design.

To space the appearance of habitual patterns of graphic design is different than to experience graphic design as a more living thing, that is to say, articulated in terms and ways that are still beyond the grasp of current design discourses, hence different than the normative and normal social practices of the design discipline. If indiscipline is a social phenomenon that occurs to open up a design space where everything is an open to be negotiated and it is possible to transform things and participants, then from indiscipline it is possible to change the very ways of designing things. Formally circumscribing the problem of this thesis in between

39 Performance studies scholar Diana Taylor in earlier versions of her text "Acts of Transfer" argued that performance "allows us to look at all of those things as mutually constituting, so that we really can't think about behaviour and embodied practice without thinking about disciplinary kind of performances— [...]—but at the same time there is a really wonderful liberatory, contestatory aspect to it, because we can perform things in different ways: performance is about action, it's about intervention, it's about breaking into a structure and finding other options for it."

40 "[M]ore and more designers refer to their profession in (immaterial) terms such as 'visual communication', 'information architecture', etc. These particular notions painfully show the shift in graphic design towards the denial and neglect of its own physical dimensions." Experimental Jetset (2001). *Disrepresentationism Now! On the social, political, and revolutionary role of graphic design*. More an attempt than a manifesto. Voice 2001, AIGA

the tension that there may be no such a thing as ‘the socially engaged design field’ still there may be different ways of becoming social that can expand design in terms and dimensions that may benefit projects and participants, we hypothesise as well that:

design unfolds as a practice from an existing discipline although its performance emerges transformed by the encounter with others.

If having a discipline is the basis for indiscipline, then indiscipline is a method, perhaps even a necessary move, for designing the *different*, or better the *socially engaged*, practices, actions, directions and things and kinds of postindustrial engagements we had been looking for all along.

In between observation and provocation of a particular journey, through indiscipline as a hypothesis therefore, we aim a more nuanced and thorough understanding of social design as a way of seeing and acting in the world differently by design and as a design expert. Before any principles and practices of being or becoming socially engaged can be identified (if these may exist), first and foremost one has to thoroughly explore and understand the indiscipline *to design* that is also experienced by participants in co-design situations that potentially opens up different social performances and of designing. Our position is not to validate indiscipline as the practice of socially engaged design, instead we explore questions of:

how, when, where, with and by whom, the spatial indiscipline of design articulates simultaneously an open politics that is experienced as an *indiscipline to design* with others?

Attending to how conventional form-acts of graphic designing become transformed and/or expanded in the encounter with others, rather than searching for general how to's or factual social works of design as another independent design discipline or regime, this thesis is assumedly an open-ended exploration of the relational part of designing processes in ways that do not reduce socialization to instrumental relations but instead enact the phenomena of indiscipline as a potentially transformative phenomenon (a more living thing) for the benefit of participants and the things they design.

In summary, by conjoining the perspectives of Gentes and Foucault, we became committed to make the social encounter and collaboration process between diffuse and expert designers more explicit in design terms. Furthermore, intersecting

what we currently (can) do with what we aim to do (in the future), to uncover indications, patterns, and insights of how it became possible from within graphic design to experience moments and situations wherein design emerged truly different, beyond the discipline, as maybe finally, socially engaged.

Hoping to make connections with the historical and contemporary debates about the social turn in design, we finally redefined the scope of this research establishing two key focal points: (1) the social space and experience of design; and (2) the visual practice of graphic design. The main objective of this research is to contribute to grow the vocabulary and disclose new knowledge about the practice of design as a social space and experience. Therefore, from first point emerges the requirement to analyse and interpret the relational process of design towards a descriptive model that can frame the object of study of this thesis which concerns the social event of designing. In the second point, we are interested in expanding the discourse of the visual communication engagement. Through our double view of indisciplinarity, the goal is to challenge disciplinary assumptions rethinking the 'object' of graphic design and imagine new design directions for the visual communication field.

Theoretical framework, research design and methods

2.5 The binocular of indiscipline

This thesis is a reflective interpretation of a personal journey through social design. More than a documentary to account a stable practice it consists in bringing together a set of cases to describe a practice of visual communication destabilized by the social, therefore, as we have hypothesized, in transition towards different kinds of designing.

Critically reflecting upon our design work from the position of design researcher, for the construction of research, we consider the whole practice developed in the course of 6 years since this research began. Most of the work consisted of participating in different social initiatives and participatory processes about community and local development, the Right to the city. Using indiscipline as a framework of interpretation we looked through the cases where we could explore and understand in depth the phenomenon from different points of view, thereby disclosing different aspects of what we mean by social design in this thesis. Sometimes happening as a big event or other times revealed in a simple gesture, common to each experience of indiscipline is the addressing of an event or gesture that is apparently beyond the grasp of design, distorted as non-design or reframed as the end of designing by participants at the time. On the basis of interrogating ‘what if these instead represent design expanded in its social and spatial possibilities’ as a discipline, as a practice or as a performance we developed what we call the binocular of indiscipline.

2.5.1 Orienting the research in line with spatial and experiential lens

The binocular of indiscipline is a theoretical framework of observation we developed to interpret real design engagements and more specifically analyse situations of destabilization or when practitioners seem to find themselves without a discipline. It is composed by two key lenses: (1) the spatial process of design and (2) the experiential event of designing.

The spatial perspective is built through the concepts afforded by Gentes which are a foundational reference in this thesis. Even though the author is not concerned with the practices that care to work with expanded social matters and diverse stakeholders in wider and more complex social arenas, as we are specifically, her account of “the indiscipline of design” afforded to capture two social situations

that, for us, form the basis of design performance as a discipline. As we have seen, how things are designed in the micro encounter between different elements and in the macro meeting between different disciplines (see chapter 2.4). Seeing design as a space where things are gathered, confronted and composed, Gentes does not attend however to how design itself can become transformed or expanded by participants. In other words, how design may space the appearance of non-design or anti-design gestures/things which are part of the event, constitutive of the process of design, hence part of making design under-determined, that is, into an indiscipline. In the spatial approach described by Gentes design appears as a de-territorialized process, one that can be practiced for instance in a neighbourhood in the same manner as it would be practiced in a studio. In the growing body of discourse about socially engaged processes of design, however, what appears crucial to examine is how the context actually affects designing and design expertise (see 2.1 and 2.2). As we have seen in previous chapters, it remains unknown how social engagement can best take place when working in different settings with varieties of stakeholders can cause practitioners to find themselves without a role or in difficulties to understand how to apply design knowledge. In this sense, Gentes's concept of indiscipline does not accommodate the experiential 'how to' dimension that brings design into being focusing mainly on the 'how of' design that is enacted even when social and cultural processes do not involve design experts.

The notion of indiscipline afforded by Foucault, in the previous chapter, postulates that the expansion of discipline happens in the bodily/material confrontation with those who are apparently different or opposite to discipline. Those who don't know how to perform *the right* discipline or maybe don't know even what the discipline exactly is. If indiscipline applies also to processes that do not always involve design experts, as Gentes argues, what if social design is only possible to perceive by attention to the diffuse designers, non-experts, or simply the people? Engaged in co-design processes, as experts of their own experience, stakeholders or recipients of a future design, diffuse designers play fundamental parts in co-design processes alongside design experts beyond merely appearing as "figures" in the design space. More than instrumentality and mediated presence, Foucault's notion of indiscipline proposes an "alter-politics".⁴¹ In asking how do *others* design, alone or together with design experts, the indiscipline of Foucault adopts the viewpoint of the experiential. When through the spatial lens, design

41 Here we draw from Eduardo Kohn's idea of "alter-politics", when he claims "what I am trying to do here matters for politics; the tools that grow from attention to the ways the Runa relate to other kinds of beings can help think possibility and its realization differently. This, I hope, can speak to what Ghassan Hage (2012) calls an "alter-politics"—a politics that grows not from opposition to or critique of our current systems but one that grows from attention to another way of being, one here that involves other kinds of living beings." (2013, p. 14)

is the discipline that gathers all different disciplines engaged in co-creation or co-production – as a kind of glue – that maintains its form-act as a generic plane of interaction (see chapter 2.2). Through the experiential lens, design appears as the discipline that becomes undisciplined only to emerge *socially* expanded in its scope and possibilities by the ways it is performed differently through others, in different settings and different ways of approaching making. In this view, design is no longer a generic plane of action rather it matches the social interactions that bring it into being.

The absence of a ‘how to’ in Gentes’s approach, opens up a space for another perspective that can complement the spatial construct by moving us closer to the experience of design, pointing to observe what things, actions and gestures participants do when designing, and what these do to the design discipline? Grounding observations in real cases, the spatial and the experiential lens are two analytical approaches which combined together form a binocular of indiscipline and perform something novel: the perception of depth and analytics of movement. Setting the focus not only to observe but to rethink situations of design conception differently, the double vision of the design space and the design experience can help us thoroughly observe what, when, where, how and why design became different, transformed, expanded or opposed in ways that comprehensively uncover social dimensions of design that may still be unexpected or hold under-explored properties.

In the binocular of indiscipline, to frame the spatial lens Annie Gentes remains our main theoretical shoulder. For the experiential lens, we cross borders between theatre studies and anthropological research based on two authors whom we encountered on the course of this design research.

Founded on the notion of indiscipline proposed by Foucault, the experiential lens is built with the “aesthetics of the performative” developed by Professor of Theatre Studies Erika Ficher-Lichte (2008) in the book “The transformative power of performance: a new aesthetics” and the thoughts of “becoming another with another” articulated by anthropologist Eduardo Kohn (2013) in “How forests think: toward an anthropology beyond the human”. Keeping in mind our purpose to disclose the space and the experience of the discipline of design, we do not cover all the theories and approaches of social and cultural processes intentionally. Instead, our method is to explore a set of examples of design practice from the perspectives and concepts of these two authors and observe what happens to design – what happens in confrontation with Gentes’s spatial approach and our general assumptions as design practitioners and researchers. Similar to Gentes’s pragmatic approach to design, these two authors in different ways do not treat social and cultural processes as irreducible complexities rather compose them into analyzable wholes. Developing particular frameworks of analysis and

interpretation specific to their contexts of inquiry, the two authors are able to deeply understand and describe characteristics of complex social and cultural phenomena. Complementing the pragmatic perspective, furthermore, social and cultural situations are neither described as instrumental processes in leveraging outsiders' agendas nor as processes which result from the work of specialists to the neglect of everything else.⁴² In adopting the viewpoint of these two authors this was a crucial aspect for the construction of the binocular of indiscipline. Mainly because we aim to make sense of undisciplined moments and situations as fundamentally design happenings whose protagonists can be traced beyond the expert and whose unknown characteristics are of the discipline in its expansion to include what it can be but it is maybe not yet. Set in motion within the discipline of design, the concepts and perspectives developed by the two authors perform Foucault's indiscipline thereby contributing to expand the vocabulary and open up new approaches in the growing body of design discourse about the social turn. Before articulating more precisely each author's contribution to the binocular and the experiential lens, in the next two sections we present each of them separately revealing the main ideas and concepts that became fundamental for this thesis.

2.5.2 The aesthetics of the performative: our reading of Erika Fischer-Lichte

Erika Fischer-Lichte (2008) is not a practitioner and her fundamental approach to frame a new aesthetics of theatre is based upon looking at the audience. In her book, Fischer-Lichte observes diverse examples of art performances, especially since the 1960s, contemplating how "spectators" become affected, respond and interact in relation to different modes of experiencing and making art that emerge through their bodily co-presence with the "actors".⁴³ Exploring how "performance" actually involves and transforms its audience, the challenge is to grasp what constitutes the work of art when performance as an event of creation cannot be sharply distinguished from the experience the work itself. In this view, Fischer-Lichte situates the meaning and purpose of performance in what she calls its "specific aestheticity" as an event constituted through, this is an important point, the "mediality" of two groups of participants, actors and spectators, whose bodily

42 As we have seen in the historical and contemporary debates there is not precisely a lack of investigation about collaboration and social practices of design. What occurs is a lack of depth in the questions of 'how' so our discourses do not continue to treat the social as an irreducible complexity nor a phenomenon that is instrumental for design as a result our constant and exclusive attention to design experts to the neglect of everything else.

43 Tracing an interesting parallel with the emergence of socially and politically engaged design practices, Erika Fischer-Lichte (2008) describes the "performative turn" in the art domain since the 1960's as the conceptual transformation from "work of art" to "event".

co-presence articulates an interactive encounter able to achieve the “reenchantment of the world” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The “aesthetics of the performative” is not concerned with cultural negotiation instead for Fischer-Lichte artistic value and purpose reside in the deeper experience of *being in performance* unfolding a transformative experience for all participants as the temporary blurring between art and life (Fischer-Lichte, 2008).

The specific “mediality” of performance, argues the author, is what makes the work of art always unique and unrepeatable. As Fischer-Lichte explains, performance is constituted in the moment “play” becomes “social event” (2008, p. 41). In other words, the transition from a static, fixed and transferable work of art – the artefact – to an unrepeatable and unique event – the performance – occurs when spectators become actors. That is, when observers or recipients of a theatre play enter the artistic situation as equal co-subjects aware of a “reciprocal relationship of influence”, hence aware of sharing a responsibility for what may happen (2008, p. 50). Performance is a peculiar phenomenon, from the perspective of Fischer-Lichte, because actors or artists who deliberately chose to expose themselves to these uncontrollable events suddenly have to adapt to the situation as well. They become spectators. What happens is what Fischer-Lichte calls the “reversal of roles” in which the audience is not only communicating with the artist it begins in fact interfering with artistic doings in material and semiotic terms. In this sense, spectators partake in the making of the work of art as co-actors which makes performance an ongoing “self-referential and ever-changing feedback loop” (2008, p. 38). As the author explains:

“Through their physical presence, perception, and response, the spectators become co-actors that generate the performance by participating in the “play.” The rules that govern the performance correspond to the rules of a game, negotiated by all participants — actors and spectators alike; they are followed and broken by all in equal measure.” (2008, p. 32)

Performance as a social event “requires the participation of everyone, yet without any single participant being able to plan, control or produce it alone” (2008, p. 50). This is how performance, in Fischer-Lichte’s argument, can “negotiate processes of democratisation, and redefine relationships between members of a community.” (2008, p. 50) The pivotal point of performance, argues the author, is the event where artists and spectators are able to “physically experience community with another group from which they are originally excluded” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 55).

Because performance “relativized, if not abolished entirely, the fundamental division of producers and recipients” (2008, p. 162), its “specific aestheticity” argues Fischer-Lichte is that of an “autopoietic system” (2008, p. 39). In

Fischer-Lichte's view, this notion describes a fundamentally unpredictable and self-organizing process that is the product and the producer of participants' interactions ⁴⁴(Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 165). It unfolds through "self-generation" as each gesture is a product and producer of subsequent gestures constituting and discerning the feedback-loop, thus, performance in its uniqueness. As the author argues:

"The effect of the autopoietic feedback loop negates the notion of autonomous subject. The artist, like all participants, is assumed to be a subject engaged in a continuous process of determining and being determined. This mutual determination contradicts the notion of a subject that sovereignly exerts their free will and can fashion themselves independently of others and of external directives. Equally, this conception vehemently opposes the notion of a spectator determined exclusively by outside forces and escaping all responsibility for their actions. The perceptible workings of the autopoietic feedback loop, apparent in all forms of role reversal between actors and spectators, allows all participants to experience themselves as co-determinate participants of the action. Neither fully autonomous nor fully determined by others" ... (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 165)

Performance is inaugurated through the phenomenon of "presence" and can only unfold as a work of art under the condition of "liveness" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 68). For the author, role reversals, the creation of communities or physical contact are "specific processes dependent on the bodily co-presence of actors and spectators that cannot be grasped by reproduction technologies" (2008, p. 69). The "mediatization of performance", according to the author, "invalidates the feedback loop" even when its artistic possibilities are applied productively (2008, p. 68). This is due to a foundational characteristic of performance to make production and reception occur at the same time, that emerged as an opposition and subversion to the growing commercialized and mediatized culture since 1960s. The "authentic" bodily co-presence of actors and spectators makes performance a continuous becoming of the autopoietic feedback loop therefore "once it is over; it can never be repeated in the exact same way." (2008, p. 75) In turn, mediatized or non-live performances maintain the separation between production and reception which insists on the institutionalized or conventional aesthetics of the work of art as fixed, transferable and material artefacts created to tell a story and represent something other or some meaning grander than itself.

44 The "autopoietic self-organizing system" is a concept Fischer-Lichte borrows from the biologists and philosophers Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana, to describe a system which permanently integrates newly emerging, unplanned, and unpredictable elements, hence, it is open to deviations and surprises, framing contingency as a pre-condition as well as a defining principle of its operation.

Performance as an experience of shared bodies and shared space

Perceived as a live “autopoietic feedback loop” performance is aesthetically conceived by Fischer-Lichte as an experience of shared bodies and shared space⁴⁵ (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 36). Happening as a social event, performance extends interactions to include the transformations that happen to things and to space. Drawing from the author, the phenomenon of “presence” involves and transfigures everything and everyone in performance, beyond the human participants. Presence, as argued by Fischer-Lichte (2008, pp. 96-100), “marks not an expressive but a purely performative quality” in which physical gestures, behaviours, affections and actions bring forth participants as what they are but in a constant state of becoming. The fundamental point here is what Fischer-Lichte describes as “the performative generation of materiality” which is the phenomenon in which materiality is not given, as a fixed and transferable artefact or meaning, but “emergent” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). It self-references the feedback loop, thus, performance is neither a representation nor the illustration of a text, a dramatic character, or any preconceived meanings. Rather it constitutes, argues Fischer-Lichte, a “new and singular reality for the artist and the audience, [...]. not merely interpreted [...] but first and foremost experienced” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 16-17). In this view, “corporality”, “spatiality” and “tonality” are some dimensions identified by Fischer-Lichte that contribute to create the whole experience of timelessness, hence, add to the transfiguration of reality in its becoming extraordinary.

“Corporality” relates to the notion of “embodiment” and concerns how actors articulate their bodily presence generating different interpretations and responses from spectators (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 77). There are three types of “presentness” identified by Fischer-Lichte: 1) the “*weak* concept of presence” which refers the actors’ representation of a character on stage; 2) the “*strong* concept of presence” wherein actors command space and hold captive the spectators’ attention; and 3) the “*radical* concept of presence” which accounts the situations where actors invoke the spectators’ bodies as pivotal (including animal bodies) and these become completely immersed interacting as co-subjects in performance (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 94-99).

Just like corporality, “spatiality” is an interactive social emergence although in this case not of bodies but of space. The space where performance takes place, according to Fischer-Lichte, is a “performative space” which articulates specific features of sound, light, smell, and limits and possibilities for movement, use and perception. The way these dimensions are realized or subverted creates a

⁴⁵ Drawing from Max Herrmann’s pioneer perspectives of theatre between 1910 and 1930 that performance aesthetically highlights the experience of real bodies and real space. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 36)

transitory and fleeting “spatiality” that “does not exist before, beyond, or after the performance, but emerges in and through it” (2008, p. 107). The performative space creates what Fischer-Lichte calls “atmospheres” which are sensual impressions upon seeing or entering the play or performance (2008, p.114). These are marked by the specific presences of humans and objects, their reality in space, their interactions and also that which surrounds them. Due to the presentness of interactions, Fischer-Lichte argues “atmospheres are not bound to a place but nonetheless pour out into, and thus shape, the space. They neither belong just to the objects or people who appear to radiate them nor to the people who enter a space and physically sense them.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.115) Atmospheres reveal performance in its ability to confuse reality with fiction, because they “exist in the interplay of elements” as in the tensions and possibilities between motion and occupation, distance and proximity, appearance and disappearance, inclusion and exclusion (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.115). What can occur to objects in performance is what Fischer-Lichte accounts as the “ecstasy of things”. The notion refers the state when objects become conspicuous to a point which, beyond the specific function they are intended to play in performance, they unexpectedly influence bodies, space and their interactions as if “claiming a life of their own” (2008, p. 115).

“Tonality” concerns specifically how sounds and tones of voice and language contribute to performance but are also embedded and contribute to both “corporeality” and “spatiality”.

Marking the how “corporeality”, “spatiality” and “tonality” are organized together there is another dimension which is fundamental for the aesthetics of performance as event: “temporality”. Unlike subjects, spaces and objects which are not simply given rather appear, become transfigured or transformed and disappear, according to Fischer-Lichte, “temporality” is a concrete materiality in performance. Yet it plays a crucial role in how the event is experienced because, as Fischer-Lichte argues, time constitutes the condition of possibility for all the presences marking and structuring the specific impression of “temporality” of the situation accordingly (2008, p. 130). “Time brackets or pockets” and “rhythm” are two kinds of temporal organization. “Time brackets” or “pockets of time” describe a series of moments in time which are marked by the appearance and disappearance of something absorbing all the attention for the duration of its presence (2008, p.132). These “pockets” can have different durations (in chronologic time) and appear by chance not precisely in given order.

In contrast, “rhythm” is for the author an organising principle of time that aims at regularity. It concerns the reproduction of specific conditions although it is simultaneously able to transform those same conditions. As the author writes:

“[i]n rhythm, the foreseeable and the unforeseeable interact. The exchange between repetition and deviation produces rhythm. Rhythm can thus be described as an organizing principle that presupposes permanent transformation and operates in order to further such change.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.134)

Rhythm as a tool can “prevent a fixed hierarchical relationship between elements. They all appear equally important. Their specific materiality and their individual appearance in space move into the foreground.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.135) The more interesting about rhythm, according to Fischer-Lichte, is that it “provides the autopoietic feedback loop with particularly favorable conditions for its fulfillment [...] in a manner perceptible to the audience.”⁴⁶ (2008, p.137)

The extraordinary

In performance participants enter “a state of permanently heightened attention” (2008, p. 165). As we have seen, gestures, things and meanings do not follow a clearly comprehensible and predictable logic only that of the feedback loop and role reversal situation itself (2008, p. 165). Possibilities for action or response can only be found, according to the author, in performance,⁴⁷ so this being bodily (self-)conscious about interacting with others makes the ordinary and all that emerges in the event remarkable and “conspicuous”⁴⁸ (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.166). Attention is not widely distributed but follows precisely *that/those* who or which support the understanding of the happening (2008, p. 165). This phenomenon opens up for what Fischer-Lichte describes as the

46 The complete citation: “provides the autopoietic feedback loop with particularly favorable conditions for its fulfillment. Furthermore, it draws the audience’s attention to just this process. By organizing and structuring the performative generation of materiality, rhythm also enables this materiality to emerge as an agent in the feedback loop’s autopoiesis. Through rhythm, the performative generation of materiality and the feedback loop’s autopoiesis are productively engaged with one another in a manner perceptible to the audience.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.137)

47 As the author describes, “[t]he autopoietic feedback loop transfers the spectators into a state which alienates them from their daily environment and its rules and norms without offering any guidelines for a reorientation.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179)

48 On the account of the “conspicuous”, artist Allan Kaprow (1993), who used the term “Happening” to identify his works, argued that despite the inherent contingent and situated character of such artistic practices, there is a distinction between mindless and mindful, intentional, actions. In his own words: “A Happening is always a purposive activity, whether it is game-like, ritualistic, or purely contemplative. (It may even have as its purpose no purpose.) Having a purpose may be a way of paying attention to what is commonly not noticed. [...] Without either an audience or a formally designated stage or clearing, the performer becomes simultaneously agent and watcher. She or he takes on a task of “framing” the transaction internally, by paying attention in motion. (1993 p. 188) [...] In other words, you experience directly what you already know in theory: that consciousness alters the world, that natural things seem unnatural once you attend to them, and vice-versa. [...] When you do life consciously, however, life becomes pretty strange – paying attention changes the thing attended to – so the Happenings were not nearly as lifelike as I had supposed they might be. But I learned something about life and “life” (Kaprow, 1993, p. 195).

emergence of the ordinary perceived and experienced as “extraordinary”⁴⁹ – as transformed and even transfigured (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.99).

According to Fischer-Lichte, contributing to this phenomenon there are “two different types of perception and generation of meaning” in performance (2008, p. 144). One, which is linked with the instant physical reactions of spectators that are the result of immediate perception of the artists’ or other spectators’ actions beyond the meanings that these actions might carry (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 18). Immediately experienced in isolation these actions appear “de-semanticized because they are perceived in their specific materiality and not as carriers of meaning; they are neither put in relation to other elements nor to any other context” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 140). Although, these are not devoid of meaning, nor the process that occurs in performance is one of de-semanticization. A physical response emerges in “self-reference” to that which has triggered it so when participants experience the “extraordinary” it means their perception is oscillating between the orders of presence and representation. That is to say, perception flickers between what things are in reality and what they mean in the event, and vice versa. The process is similar to “a reflection in motion”, wherein, rather than addressing implicit meanings of the situation, the spectators engage in a reflection about “why” this happened and “how” we may or may not respond (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 18). This “opens up the possibility for all participants to experience a metamorphosis”. (2008, p. 23)

In the case when bodies, things or any action which can hold the attention spontaneously “trigger a wealth of associations, ideas, thoughts, memories and motions in the perceiving subjects”, this is the process of “associative generation of meaning” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 140-143). According to Fischer-Lichte, this process implies the possibility of making connections with diverse phenomena, which is opposed to interpretation that usually “depends on searching for meanings which might “match” according to certain criteria, although, even in this case, they might not always be accessible to the interpreting subject.” (2008, p. 143) What is peculiar about the “associative generation” perception is that it is not concealed or hidden inside the conscious of the individual who experiences it. Associations that occur “without intention and effort of the concerned subjects and sometimes even against their wills” tend to be bodily articulated therefore have physical or gestural effects in perceptible ways. These *autopoietic* expressions, one might say (in the sense of self-generating connections, interactions and adaptations between

49 From the original: “Presence does not make something extraordinary appear. Instead, it marks the emergence of something very ordinary and develops it into an event: the nature of man as embodied mind. To experience the other and oneself as present means to experience them as embodied minds; thus, ordinary existence is experienced as extraordinary – as transformed and even transfigured. [...] the displacement inherent to this transfiguration, [...]. [...] stresses the becoming-conspicuous and becoming-present of the ordinary”. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.99)

the mind and the body), interfere and with the whole “autopoietic feedback loop” situation between participants (2008, p. 143). Effectively, argues Fischer-Lichte, these are “acts of materialisation” that occur when “either meanings become perceptible once articulated physically, or they stimulate physically traceable reactions.” (2008, p. 143)

Two concepts derive from these two kinds of perception identified by the author. The metaphor of “infection” which emerged in theatre studies to highlight, as Fischer-Lichte argues, that a performance:

“does not depend on the “work of art” but on the interaction of the participants. What emerges from the interaction is given priority over any possible creation of meaning. [...] What matters is the fact *that* something occurs and *that what* occurs affects, if to varying degrees and in different ways, everyone involved.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 36)

And the concept of “energy” which describes for Fischer-Lichte a certain vagueness, that results from the immediacy of the perceptual experience, yet can be physically sensed, mobilised and changed by all participants at any given time during the performance (2008, p. 211). In art performance, artists used the “ability to sense energy flows as a tool to create communal experience.” (2008, p. 59)

To summarize this part, the generation of materiality and meanings as a *live* event ensures that what is occurring is actually occurring in the present (time). The “extraordinary” reveals, as Fischer-Lichte argues, that:

“[a]ll performances are self-referential and constitutive of reality. When an actor playing Hamlet walks across the stage it primarily signifies the reality of the actor walking across the stage. The actor is not just pretending to walk. He is actually walking and changing reality through his act.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 170)

When participants enter a state of “being unable to command processes and events entirely of instead being determined by them to a degree” (2008, p. 167) then performance accomplishes exactly what it signifies: participants perceive the world as “enchanted” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 180). As Fischer-Lichte (2008, p. 132) argues, at the same time that performances are short-lived, the “reechantment of the world” affords an experience of “timelessness” (2008, p. 132). The “crisis” of meaning that participants enter is a “liminal state” which is an estrangement of what is taken for granted and an experience of being betwixt or between contrasting frames: feeling subject and object at the same time, perceiving whatever appears as extraordinary, acting and observing at the same time, responding to something and simultaneously producing unintended new turns in the feedback loop, doubting

what is real and what is imagined⁵⁰ (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 176-179). What occurs in liminality is that the “recourse to conventional behavior patterns is pointless. The established standards are no longer valid and new ones not yet formulated.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 176) In this sense, depending on what is happening, argues the author, liminality can be a tortuous or lustful experience or even oscillate between the two (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179). Liminality is a state when participants are “enchanted” engaged in and by performance, even if they may not actually emerge transformed in reality after the performance ends (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179).

The outcome of performance

Seeing from the perspective of “the aesthetics of the performative”, the outcome of performance is *performance* itself. The whole social event that is always unique and unrepeatable sets apart performances from each other or from their reproducibility, is the interactive and confrontational dynamic between participants that affects specific transformations (big and small) in their prescribed roles, predictable modes of being and engaging of participants, which leads to an ongoing generation of materiality and meaning that is situated and can never be repeated (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The mediality of two groups of participants engaged in a feedback loop dynamic point to “immediacy” and “authenticity” as two fundamental aspects of the “aesthetics of the performative” (2008, p.68). They account performance as a *live* event in the present whose process engages production and reception at the same time. This means that performance carries through reiteration, that is, interactions and tensions generating further *relational* or *responsive* interactions and tensions.⁵¹ In other words, the outcomes and outputs of a gesture are always gestures themselves, in the sense that objects or specific situations created deliberately as outcomes in the event, according to Fischer-Lichte, are means to keep *performance* going or “they remain as traces of the performance after its conclusion” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 75). The condition of “liveness” (2008, p.68), ensures there is no exact beginning and ending of performance because it depends on the encounter and how co-presence unfolds between participants. Therefore, beginning and end constitute temporal incisions equally conceivable at any other point in time. When a performance ends effectively, participants may or may not emerge transformed by the experience. Liminality is predominantly temporary moreover, Fischer-Lichte argues, it lacks the social recognition of lasting impacts. Recognizing the medium specificity

50 According to Fischer-Lichte, “every turn the feedback loop takes must also be seen as a transition and hence a liminal situation.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 177)

51 See also: Schneider and Ruppert (2017, p. 112)

or the “mediality” of performance, Fischer-Lichte draws the attention to the crucial importance of how the object of performance cannot be separated from the subjects that bring performance into being. In other words: “the danger and hope of transformation is always situated within the specific medial conditions of performance; that is to say, they are implied in the physical co-presence of actors and spectators.” (2008, p. 191) Historically, performance has identified transformation as a fundamental condition in “the assumption that theatre performances possess a transformative potential [...]. that performance motivates the transformation of their participants — actors and spectators alike.” (2008, p. 191) Although performance can be experienced as transformative,⁵² it depends on each individual case to concentrate on the event itself or making change lasting⁵³ (2008, p. 179). A crucial observation made by Fischer-Lichte is that the issue lies not in the difference between “artistic and non-artistic” events but in the fact that performance constitutes an “aesthetic” rather than a “non-aesthetic” event (2008, p. 195). The author labels:

“those liminal experiences aesthetic which make the journey the goal, the liminal experiences which use the journey to reach “another” goal as non-aesthetic. Such goals could consist of a socially recognised change of status; the creation of winners and losers or communities; the legitimisation of claims of power; the creation of social bond; entertainment. That is to say, aesthetic experience concerns the experience of a threshold, a passage in itself; the very process of transition already constitutes the experience. Non-aesthetic liminal experience concerns the transition *to* something and the resulting transformation *into* this or that. (2008, p. 199) [...] These situations require decision-making which refer to goal-oriented actions.” (2008, p. 200)

As opposed to rituals, festivals, spectacles, sports competitions, political events which are non-aesthetic events, performance “dramatizes”, in Fischer-Lichte’s terms, by framing and demarcating certain aspects of the situation enabling greater vividness of experience and action for participants (Fischer-Lichte, 2008,

52 In a recent interview, Fischer-Lichte (Peric, 2016) argues that her point of what she calls: “transformative aesthetics” is that, when you let go, only then, you will expose yourself to all these different experiences that a really exciting performance offers. Then, something can happen to you. Not that it will change your life, but it can help you to understand some things better, to change your attitude. It happens slowly, but it transforms you. We have to distinguish this kind of process from this crazy idea that art should make the world a better place; how could it do that? It can’t. It can change the ideas, attitudes, habits of a single, singular person, and, only if there are many of them, then, maybe, something can change. But it is an emergent phenomenon; it is not something you can plan!” Peric, T. 2016, “Understanding versus Experiencing: An interview with Erika Fischer-Lichte”, *Critical Stages/Scènes Critiques*, The IATC journal/Revue de l’AICT, Issue No14. Available at: <http://www.critical-stages.org/14/understanding-versus-experiencing-interview-with-erika-fischer-lichte/#end>. [Accessed in: July 12, 2018]

53 The original quote: “Whether the experience of the concerned subjects – caused by the destabilization of the self, the world, and its norms – leads to a reorientation and lasting transformation depends on each individual case.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179)

p. 201) The process of “dramatization”, according to Fischer-Lichte, successfully distinguishes cultural performances from ordinary reality by concentrating the attention on the institutional frame of Art or the “artistic” play rather than pointing to the general nature of the social event itself which categorizes a situation as “non-artistic” (2008, p. 201) Being a transformative experience performance “depends on the individual’s perception whether they are concentrating on the liminal state into which their perception has led them or whether they are experiencing it as a transition to a specific goal.” (2008, p. 200) Still, emerging as an “aesthetic” event performance makes the social the goal because it’s the social interactions that influence and transform the individual’s perceptions, presence and actions in “performative” bodily, spatial, tonal and temporal terms, as we have seen. In this sense, argues Fischer-Lichte, the “aesthetics of the performative” cannot be grasped without the political and the ethical dimensions which are both constitutive dimensions of the social event (2008, p. 171).

The “immediacy” of performance (2008, p.96) simultaneously creates a momentary distance from conventional practices and conducts associated with societal, group or individual roles, norms or habits. Artists and spectators alike cannot abstract bodies nor minds (to make sense) from what is happening, they must make instant decisions and act (2008, p. 171). This does not mean that everything is allowed in performance, rather performance generates its own rules and norms as a specific politics and particular *ethos* of “play” from within the particular “social reality” which makes everyone responsible and accountable for what may be/become proper or improper, relevant or useless, disruptive or not, to do.⁵⁴ The crucial point about “the aesthetics of the performative” is that participants attend to the situation and work their way through it by moving forward with others beyond preconceived habits, and that constitutes a *live* and unique social, political and ethical event (2008, p. 170-171). According to Fischer-Lichte, the political dimension of performance reveals itself more explicitly in the feedback loop between participants. Whenever one side fails to play along or in attempts to control the situation power play determines interactions, that is when the political becomes evident (2008, p. 43-44). The ethical is the dimension which demonstrates the specific reversals and

54 For instance, some spectators of Marina Abramović’s performance *Lips of Thomas* became actors when they “could no longer bear her ordeal. They hastened to the blocks of ice, took hold of the artist, and covered her with coats. Then they removed her from the cross and carried her away. Thus, they put an end to the performance.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 11) As Fischer-Lichte argues: “[h]er spectators were not concerned with their own physical well-being so much as that of the artist. The actions that transformed the spectators into actors, i.e. the physical contact with the artist, were aimed at protecting her bodily integrity. They were the result of an ethical decision directed at another, the artist.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 15) Fischer-Lichte accounts other examples where different kinds of politics and ethics are played out in performance, yet, the fundamental point about in the aesthetics of the performative is that participants attend to the situation and work their way through it, moving forward with others beyond familiar and expected interactions, and that constitutes a political and ethical practice.

turns that each individual participant triggers in the event. In performance, the ethical is not to the same as to act responsibly accordingly to conventional frames of behaviour, whether moral, symbolic, disciplinary or institutional.⁵⁵ Rather, the ethical is brought forth more clearly in how participants “authentically” navigate and negotiate constraints in the situation between the process of “play” and the “social event” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 41). The ethical is about participants giving themselves over to the broader sociality that performance is, therefore performing genuine actions and roles in self-reference and contextual to the happening rather than posing conventional or disciplinary frames (2008, p. 171). That is precisely when the social, the political and the ethical blur and participants themselves embody “the reenchantment of the world”.

2.5.3 Becoming another with another: reading Eduardo Kohn

From his other than human encounters and durational engagement with Quichua speaking Runa village, Ávila, in Ecuador’s Upper Amazon, Eduardo Kohn rethinks processes of representation drawing from the work of philosopher Charles Pierce on semiotics and neuroanthropologist Terrence Deacon’s application of Peircean theories to the realm of biology.

In the particularly dense forests of the Amazon, Kohn comes to argue that the many layers and various selves in the forest come “to think their ways through us” (Kohn, 2013, p. 42). People in Ávila, argues Kohn, “try to make sense of these various selves that inhabit the forest by trying to see how they see, and by imagining how different perspectives interact.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 96) Kohn’s overall argument about “how forests think” is that the ecological webs in which the Runa are immersed make visible that “nonsymbolic representational modalities pervade the living world—human and nonhuman” (Kohn, 2013, p. 8).

Attending to nonhuman beings, such as dogs, the forest, and immaterial phenomena, such as dreams, and the relationships these have with humans, the author demonstrates that “signs are not exclusively human affairs. All living beings sign.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 43) Everyday practices such as hunting, cooking, eating or sleeping make apparent “greater than human webs of semiosis” or a larger semiotic field of distinct ways of thinking, that are not humanlike, but which have become invisible and trivialised by our all-too-human habit of “indiscriminately applying distinctively human ways of thinking (based on symbolic representation) to any entity.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 42)

⁵⁵ Drawing from Butler and Athanasiou, “the ethical is neither the moral nor the same as “responsibilization.” [...] I do not augment myself with my virtuousness when I act responsibly, but I give myself over to the broader sociality that I am.” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p.107).

To make clearer the point of how humans can lose themselves in the symbolic, and become radically separate from the world, Kohn explains how the process of semiosis works.

Semiosis is a process of knowing and understanding phenomena based on representation or the generation and interpretation of “signs” (Kohn, 2013, p. 9). Drawing from Pierce, it “is this living sign process through which one thought gives rise to another, which in turn gives rise to another, and so on, into the potential future.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 33) Signs capture something about the world, hence they come to represent some meaning to “an interpreting self”, who through an ongoing process of sign production and interpretation becomes increasingly oriented toward this aboutness (Kohn, 2013, p. 33). In this sense, by providing information, Kohn argues that:

“signs are more than things. They don’t squarely reside in sounds, events, or words. Nor are they exactly in bodies or even minds. They can’t be precisely located in this way because they are ongoing relational processes. Their sensuous qualities are only one part of the dynamic through which they come to be, to grow, and to have effects in the world. In other words, signs are alive. A crashing palm tree—taken as sign—is alive insofar as it can grow. It is alive insofar as it will come to be interpreted by a subsequent sign in a semiotic chain that extends into the possible future.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 33)

As ongoing relational processes, that grow and are alive:

“Signs don’t come from the mind. Rather, it is the other way around. What we call mind, or self, is a product of semiosis. That “somebody,” human or nonhuman, who takes the crashing palm to be significant is a “self that is just coming into life in the flow of time” (CP 5.421) by virtue of the ways in which she comes to be a locus—however ephemeral—for the “interpretance” of this sign and many others like it.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 34)

Thanks to a “living semiotic dynamic” in which selves are products and producers of semiosis, Kohn argues, the world is “animate” (2013, p. 16). This complex web of relations that links things, living thoughts and selves is what the author calls an “ecology of selves” (2013, p. 16). The ecology is a collective that grows, shifts and dissolves as a complex whole emphasising how “mean-ing (i.e., means-ends relations, significance, “aboutness,” telos) is a constitutive feature of the world and not just something we humans impose on it.” (Kohn, 2013, p.16)

The reason for any sign to exist, argues Kohn, is to tell selves something new or different. Although, icons, indices and symbols describe a very a provisional sense and understanding of reality (Kohn, 2013, p. 51). Drawing from Pierce, Kohn claims that “all of our experiences are semiotically mediated” (Kohn, 2013, p. 99).

Therefore, in semiosis as well as in life, argues the author, “wholes precede parts; similarity precedes difference (see Bateson 2002: 159). Thoughts and lives both begin as wholes—albeit ones that can be extremely vague and underspecified.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 64) What humans and nonhumans mean by the “real” is the product of their ways of representing and interpreting phenomena around them, and the ways in which these same phenomena enter and inundate their ways of engaging with and thinking about phenomena (Kohn, 2013, p. 97). The “living” condition is that “[o]ur thoughts are like the world because we are of the world” (2013, p. 60). Therefore, reality is both continuous with and something more than the singular perspectival human or nonhuman realities for “[t]here is no bodily, inner, or other kind of experience or thought that is unmediated”, in other words, there may be no perspective (or sign) of the real that is not a “relational” and “living” semiotic chain of thoughts and selves that extends and grows into the possible future (Kohn, 2013, p. 33).

Icons, indices and symbols

The triad of sign processes form the basic structure of perception and reasoning. Since, “[s]emiosis does not begin with the recognition of any intrinsic similarity or difference. Rather, it begins with not noticing difference. It begins with indistinction.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 50) As the author explains, when “the differences between the “sign vehicle” (i.e., the entity that is taken as a sign, [...]) and the object [...] are ignored” (Kohn, 2013, p. 31) what emerges are “signs of likeness” or “icons”. The semiotic modality of “iconicity” marks the beginning and end of all thought (Kohn, 2013, p. 50). An icon represents “a thought that is like its object. It involves an image that is a likeness of that object.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 51) Kohn notes that “indistinction” does not mean “intrinsic similarity” rather it involves a sort of confusion. That is, it is through some sort of alterity that likeness and resemblance is noticed as a “kind” or category (Kohn, 2013, p. 51-64).

Emergent from and in continuity with icons, signs are able to tell us about a difference when they “also involve a semiotic logic that points to something else—a logic that is indexical.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 51) “Indexicality”, results from complex associations of likeness, but entails “prediction”. As another semiotic modality, “indices” impel an interpretant to “guess” that something or some situation “must be linked to something other than itself, something different [...] not immediately present”, although very likely to emerge (Kohn, 2013, p. 52). “Whereas icons involve not noticing, indices focus the attention.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 32). It’s by virtue of “a chain of real connections among disparate things” that indices can point to what is not yet present as we “notice that something just happened, even though what just happened remained unclear” (Kohn, 2013, p.

32). “Indexicality”, according to Kohn, is linked with the notion of “constitutive absence” which:

“is a particular mediated way in which an absent future comes to affect the present. This is why it is appropriate to consider telos—that future for the sake of which something in the present exists—as a real causal modality wherever there is life (see Deacon 2012). The constant play between presence and these different kinds of absences gives signs their life. It makes them more than the effect of that which came before them. It makes them images and intimations of something potentially possible.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 36)

In this view, indices describe a chain of real connections that allows the absent future to affect the present (Kohn, 2013, p. 194).

Depending on the complexity of indexical configurations, the “symbolic” emerges as the third semiotic modality, although it is one which is unique to humans (Kohn, 2013, p. 32). According to Kohn, “symbols” represent things or situations “indirectly” in relation to systems of meaning that have grown into “conventions” (Kohn, 2013, p. 39). Human language is an example, that, in contrast to the other semiotic modalities entails “an interpretive shift” whereby objects are taken as significant “indirectly, by virtue of the ways in which the signs representing them related to each other and the ways in which these sign relations then mapped onto how the objects themselves were to be thought to relate to each other.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 54) Symbols involve complex “prediction” and “likeness” relations, but as Kohn argues these are also sometimes “arbitrary”. As the author explains, “unlike an icon or index, a symbol’s very being qua symbol relies on the emergence of a whole host of not necessarily existent and yet real signs that will come to interpret it.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 208) Generating meaning through absence of real physical connections with the world it is about, symbols are a kind of representation that is never fully cut off from humans. They propagate and are “sustained in social, cultural, and political contexts that have similar systemic and conventional properties” (Kohn, 2013, p. 39).

Beyond conventional human encounters

The symbolic is exemplary of a dynamic which is fundamental in Kohn’s understanding that “[a]ll life is semiotic and all semiosis is alive.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 16) According to the author, “[l]iving dynamics, as represented by even the most basic organisms, selectively “remember” their own specific self-organizing configurations.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 55) These organisms “grow” to become “reconstituted and propagated over the generations in ways that exhibit increasingly better fits to the worlds around it.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 55) This evidence

how symbols “can retain referential stability even in the absence of their objects of reference.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 55) Still, “[t]o recognise living thoughts, and the ecology of selves to which they give rise,” argues Kohn, is to become aware of when a difference can make a difference (Kohn, 2013, p. 100). It’s by capturing differences in the world that organisms flourish through re-adaptation and are able to “grow well” to fit the world around them (Kohn, 2013, p. 134).

Capturing differences, and signs, involves what the author calls “becoming another-with-an-other”, hence, thinking through how others think (Kohn, 2013, p. 140). To be confronted by another self or exposed to unfamiliar circumstances, selves perceive difference as “significant otherness” (Haraway *apud* Kohn, 2013, p. 86). That is to say, they are:

“confronted by an otherness that is radically (significantly) other—without, I would add, that otherness being incommensurable or “incognizable” (see chapter 2). But in these encounters we can nonetheless find ways to enter intimate (significant) relations with these others who are radically not us. Many of these selves who are not ourselves are also not human. That is, they are not symbolic creatures (which means that they are also not *loci* of moral judgment). As such, they force us to find new ways to listen; they force us to think beyond our moral worlds in ways that can help us imagine and realize more just and better worlds.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 86)

Something that captures “the ways in which semiotic selves are co-constituted in interaction with other such selves” is the Runa’s concept of “Soul”. As Kohn argues:

“Selves exist simultaneously as embodied and beyond the body. They are localized, and yet they exceed the individual and even the human. One way to capture this way in which selves extend beyond bodies is to say that selves have souls. In Ávila the soul—or alma as people call it, using a term of Spanish origin—marks the ways in which semiotic selves are co-constituted in interaction with other such selves. Souls emerge relationally in interaction with other souled selves in ways that blur the boundaries we normally recognize among kinds of beings.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 106)

The emergence of “souls” as an indeterminate yet existential feature of selves that works a qualifier of character, is amplified in the episodes Kohn accounts for “soul blindness”. The difficulties and possibilities experienced by the Ávila Runa in meeting jaguars, the “soul” is a difference that makes a difference for humans when, for instance:

“Returning the jaguar’s gaze encourages this creature to treat you as an equal predator—a *You*, a *Thou*. If you look away, it may well treat you as prey, soon-to-be dead meat, an *It*.” (2013, p. 148)

According to Kohn this is a case of “nonlinguistic exchange” between humans and jaguars (2013, p. 148). It accounts how “[e]ntertaining the viewpoints of other beings blurs the boundaries that separate kinds of selves.” (2013, p. 132) The mutual gaze shows that between humans and jaguars the soul is “a marker of communication and communion among selves.” (2013, p. 107) Moreover, as Kohn argues, “processes of ‘becoming with’ others change what it means to be alive; and they change what it means to be human just as much as they change what it means to be [...] a predator.” (2013, p. 150) Therefore, the author claims, “how humans represent jaguars and how jaguars represent humans can be understood as integral, though not interchangeable, parts of a single, open-ended story.” (2013, p. 9)

The Ávila Runa engage in many different “trans-species” processes and forms of communication that blur interspecies boundaries and maintain crucial habits of for surviving and everyday living in the forest. More specifically, the community makes strategic use of “direct” and “oblique” communicative strategies. For instance, the gaze between humans and jaguars is an example of a “direct” form of communication whereby humans and jaguars address each other directly and “enjoy a sort of parity according to people in Ávila. They can potentially entertain each other’s gaze in a trans-species but nevertheless, to some extent at least, intersubjective space” (2013, p. 148), that avoids complete transmutation of participants while simultaneously preventing the flipside of isolation as what Kohn calls “soul blindness” (2013, p. 132).

Communicating in “oblique” ways there is, for instance, the relationship between humans and dogs in which becoming together involves an ongoing negotiation and establishment of relations of dominance and submission between participants (2013, p. 143). As Kohn describes:

“in order for people to communicate with dogs, dogs must be treated as conscious human subjects (i.e., as *You*s, even as *Thous*); yet dogs must simultaneously be treated as objects (*Its*) lest they talk back.” (2013, p. 143)

When people in Ávila communicate with their dogs not only “they address them directly but in the third person” (2013, p. 144) they also use negative “canine imperatives”, such as tying dogs down and denying their bodily being in the world, “so as to protect their own special position as humans.” (2013, p. 144)

“If dogs were to talk back, people would enter a canine subjectivity and therefore lose their privileged status as humans. [...] Canine imperatives, then, allow people to safely address this partially individuated emerging human self about the partially deindividuated and temporarily submerged canine one.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 143)

Through oblique ways, the “attempts at communication—in short, the politics—involved in the interactions among different kinds of selves [...] are inextricably tied up with questions of power” and struggles to take a stand. (2013, p. 143) Oblique forms of communication can also refer for example to the use of hallucinogens in order to communicate with the realm of the spirits. But once status is conveyed people address and converse with these spirits directly (2013, p. 143). Here and in many other situations, using either direct or oblique modes of nonlinguistic communication (2013, p. 148), Kohn argues, “the goal is to be able to communicate across the boundaries that separate kinds without destabilizing them.” (2013, p.144)

Developing a different understanding of semiosis, grounded in the richness of his experience of “learning to live with the proliferating array of other kinds of life-forms”, Kohn explains “how the human is both distinct from and continuous with that which lies beyond it” (Kohn, 2013, p. 9). Reflecting on an experience when he himself felt separated from his body, and the webs of the world, the panic of such disentanglement made visible that radical emancipation is only possible through deep attachment. As he explains, humans “tend to assume that because something like the symbolic is exceptionally human and thus novel (at least as far as earthly life is concerned) it must also be radically separate from that from which it comes.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 50) Although, the separation that symbolic thought generates is only a starting point to realise that our distinctively human thoughts “stand in continuity” with greater than human webs of thoughts, insofar as we they are all “in some way or other the products of the semiosis that is intrinsic to life” (Kohn, 2013, p. 50).

Falling into form

Thinking how forests thinks, demonstrates that “all sign processes eventually ‘do things’ in the world, and this is an important part of what makes them alive.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 34) The habitual ways in which humans become with jaguars or communicate in with their dogs, make visible “how certain configurations of constraint on possibility emerge and of the particular manner in which such configurations propagate in the world in ways that result in a sort of pattern” (Kohn, 2013, p.157). In other words, Kohn explains that habits, regularities and patterns are the manifestation of something that has grown increasingly to

fit an environment and selectively remember its own form (Kohn, 2013, p. 55). In this perspective, the author affords his notion of “form”.

In Kohn’s argument, “form” is neither mind nor thing like but refers to “a strange but nonetheless worldly process of pattern production and propagation, [...] that does something to cause-and-effect temporality and [...] comes to exhibit its own kind of ‘effortless efficacy’ as it propagates itself through us.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 20-21) For Kohn, this “peculiar generative logic necessarily comes to permeate living beings (human and nonhuman) as they harness it”, at the same time, “it simply vanishes when the special geometry of constraints that sustains it disappears. It thus remains largely hidden from our standard modes of analysis.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 20)

Our interest in the author’s notion of “form” comes from “the very practical problem of getting inside form and doing something with it.” (2013, p. 21) According to Kohn, “[o]ne could say that our habits become noticeable to us only when they are disrupted, when we fall outside of them” (Kohn, 2013, p. 186) Yet, “[d]oing things with form requires succumbing to its effortless efficacy.” (2013, p. 187) Accessing a pattern requires finding ways to enter its logic, because, as Kohn argues, “[w]hen one is inside it there is nothing against which to push; it cannot be defined by the way it resists.” (2013, p. 20)

Form is invisible. Bodies and things “fall into form” as when a pattern emerges only under specific circumstances – like the gaze between humans and jaguars who meet each other in the forest. In this sense, “form cannot be understood without paying attention to the kinds of continuities and connections” (2013, p. 186) of how “the past’s effects on the present” give rise to form in ways that are useful and meaningful for many kinds of selves involved.

The appearance of form is due to the effortless manner in which habits propagates as specially constrained sorts of predictability (2013, p. 185). Form’s eventual efficacy is made possible by the ways in which selves are both free – or outside form – but when conditions align they fall into form.

Form is a general phenomenon that “both exceeds and is continuous with its component parts.” The form “to never look away from a jaguar encountered in the forest” (2013, p. 148) emerges in the forest when a human meets and jaguar, regardless of who is the specific human and the specific jaguar, where they and when they meet. In this sense form is “real”, although it only manifests itself when anywhere any human meets any jaguar. When it propagates itself through that specific human and that specific jaguar, and performs as if at any point in time, whether in the past or in the future, this meeting was and will be the same. “As a regularity that can potentially exceed ontological domains and temporal instances this kind of form, then, creates an emergent “always already” realm.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 179) In this sense, form is fragile and redundant, for what counts

as form, for its generation and propagation, is always something less than the situated (rich, complex, specific) emergence of form (as history and ecology) as a reality (Kohn, 2013, p. 166-167).

Finally, form is a biosocial animation that is both “real” and “general” and amplifies “the tendency of all things to take habits” which, according to Kohn, “makes the world potentially predictable and what makes life as a semiotic process, which is ultimately inferential, possible. For it is only because the world has some semblance of regularity that it can be represented. Signs are habits about habits.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 59) Even if symbolic semiosis is a kind of form, there is always something in the world that triggers it, that makes it alive and grow. Therefore, it can be only through an expanded vision of the real, that it may be possible to recognize but also go beyond the limits of form. As Kohn claims, “resistance is not agency” (Kohn, 2013, p. 91), rather, it is from being inside for that we may begin to do things with it.

2.5.4 The binocular of indiscipline: a journey of interpretation

Departing from each authors’ approach to their own context of inquiry, in this chapter, we elaborate on the concepts and ideas that constitute the binocular of indiscipline therefore explain the analytical approach of this research to explore empirical work. In the end of this section the Diagram 4 sums up the whole conceptual logic of using indiscipline as a device.

The spatial approach to design developed by Gentes is of crucial importance to the binocular insofar as the author describes indiscipline as a concrete and understandable phenomenon of design. The author enables a pragmatic understanding of how design happens or is practiced through the umbrella notion of the “field of tensions”. More than the author’s particular approach to research (see 2.3.1), our interest in Gentes’s study of indiscipline are the concepts of “projective abduction” and “under-determination” that allow us to comprehend the design construct as a social construct. Through the spatial lens, we see the practice of design in the micro plane of interactions between elements e.g. matter, ideas, pieces of knowledge; and the macro space of interaction between humans and the different disciplines or worlds they represent. The spatial situation discloses how compositions are made through which tensions and which subtractions across the micro and macro levels, therefore enabling to identify points of origin and effects of specific design gestures and relations.

Perceiving social relations and interactions of design more clearly, still, the spatial lens only goes so far. The design process continues to be interpreted as a situation or practice that always produces things tangibly different from itself. As we have argued, the event of designing itself is not precisely *a thing* in Gentes

analysis and interpretation of indiscipline. In this view, we turn to the lens of the experiential framed by the triad Foucault—Fischer-Lichte—Kohn. Using Foucault's notion of indiscipline as the umbrella, this lens is found the "aesthetics of the performative" developed by Fischer-Lichte (2008) precisely to focus on the unique and unrepeatable event of design as a living thing. The contribution of Kohn is to amplify specific relational gestures and modes of communication between participants that make sense of design as an indiscipline and socially engaged process (see Diagram 4).

In using the "aesthetics of the performative" it is important to note that our aim is to not to make an analogical (mis)appropriation, a comparative analysis or opposition between theatre and artistic performances and the happenings of design. Our focus is on the wider epistemological and ontological issues in meeting the social raised by Fischer-Lichte that can be fruitfully examined in our design context. Therefore, we use the "aesthetics of the performative" as a frame to directly interrogate particular our design assumptions, concerns and interests about real design situations. Being extremely conscious (and cautious) about the fact that what motivates the social turn in art is distinctly different than that in design and may even be irreconcilable, we aim a correspondence⁵⁶ with the "aesthetics of the performative" as an exercise on learning to see our empirical encounters of design with the social and together grow into knowledge of what is and can be socially engaged design. Attending more precisely to how Fischer-Lichte articulates performance as an artistic practice constituted through and as social interactions, at the core of our different artist and designer's look, there is something in common. The ongoing concern for articulating an artistic and designerly discourse and practice that is deeply engaged with everyday life and how it may approximate it more closely (Fischer-Lichte, 2008).

Contrary to our context, the author finds herself in a well-established field that is highly informed by current theories and an intense culture of production. For the construction of research, Fischer-Lichte examines a series of examples of theatre and art performances through a set of criteria developed from foundational references in theatre studies. To better understand "the performative turn" moreover describe specific characteristics of performance the author analyses the "mediality, materiality, semiocity, and aestheticity separately, albeit keeping in mind that they are intrinsically interlinked through the performance event. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, pp.36-37) Relying on literature to build her analytical framework while enriching it through the interpretation of examples, Fischer-Lichte (2008, p.

⁵⁶ "Correspondence" is a concept developed by Caroline Gatt and Tim Ingold (2013), that refers to a state of "swimming along" or walking side by side. For the authors, "to correspond with the world" is to be in accordance with the flow of events, not to describe or represent them, but to answer them, therefore, engaging in correspondence is to be in a state that "carries the potential of change in its very execution" (2013, p.13).

176) aims “to show when and how a state of liminality comes about and marked its possibility for transforming those who experience it.” In the argument, it is not important whether Fischer-Lichte is actually present to witness as part of audience the artistic performances she describes. For heuristic purposes her framework provides a distant look that enables a rigorous interpretation and thorough focus on each dimension:

- The “mediality” of performance lies in the bodily co-presence of two groups of participants, therefore it is grounded on a feedback loop between actors and spectators;
- The “materiality” of and in performance severs itself from preconceived meanings or functions “claiming a life of its own” (2008, p. 23). In other words, performance as an event of creation entails production and reception to occur simultaneously so whatever is produced problematizes the notion of representation because it becomes a producer of the event and further interactions between participants. The generation of materiality is performative, which means that any space, object or gesture emerges through an aesthetics of physical presence and appearing, rather than mediated effects or sole visual appearance. (2008, p. 101)
- The “semioticity” refers the ever-changing emergence of meanings in self-reference to the event and the specific political and ethical turns of the situation. Generativity grows through spontaneity (authenticity) and the presentness (immediacy) of participants’ actions and perceptions, rather than by importing symbols or conventions from the outside.
- The specific “aestheticity” of performance as a feedback loop event shifts from guiding and organizing an artistic process to induce specific modes of performative co-creation. The “aesthetics of the performative” describes performance as a fundamentally open and unpredictable process, hence autopoietic system that propagates through and as the mediality and unique materiality and semioticity of the event.

Describing when, where, how and why liminality came about and marked its possibility for transforming those who experienced it, paraphrasing Fischer-Lichte, we correspond by describing, explaining and exploring this kind of suspension as indisciplinarity when and where participants or the design situation are on the verge of transformation.

In this research, indisciplinarity is a phenomenon and experience which is directly linked with the intentionality⁵⁷ of changing a specific professional practice. The ‘I’

⁵⁷ According to Robert Stake, the singularity of cases and individual contexts are important for the understanding of phenomena in qualitative research (Stake, 1995, p.55). Furthermore, to

cannot be subtracted out from the binocular because research oscillates the focus between purely analysing design processes and amplifying possibilities that were invisible at the time of their occurrence. To clarify, when specific gestures caused unintentional things to happen we tend toward contingency in heightened state of attention to the happening and its immanent potentials for disclosing design practice anew. Being fully implicated in the context of the activities and certainly the situations through which things and ideas came to matter, the binocular is integral to the objects it captures and aims to analyse. Addressing this limitation, Fischer-Lichte's concepts provide a pragmatic analytical frame to objectively enhance spatial, temporal, bodily and material dimensions from social situations of co-creation, which may as well be design situations. Grounding the binocular in the "aesthetics of the performative" enables a critical distance to arrive at multiple interpretations of the design event.

Following the author's premise to address theatre situations, this research about the design discipline as a social practice therefore considers two groups of participants foundational for the constitution of any design engagement (see also Manzini in chapter 2.2). Trusting the "mediality" of design lies in a "feedback loop" relationship established between people and designers, observation follows not only what design experts do but also mainly the actions of diffuse designers. This is one of the gaps of knowledge in the studies of socially engaged design. Adopting the viewpoint of the experiential, the notion of the "field of tensions" is therefore expanded by the "feedback loop" which amplifies the design process as a "live" experience of "presentness" where potentially different form-acts of design – hence, indiscipline – may occur through role reversals, forms of communion, power play, spatiality, corporality, infection, etc.

To be specific about the mediality of design takes another nuance. Design processes taken as "feedback loops" of conception are durational events extended in time but also expanded through different spaces. This means that it's not only in co-presence but also in physical absence of either expert or diffuse designers that the design relationship unfolds and can hold the design event together. Let us explain this point. In the classical design situation, a client commissions a design expert to conceive and produce something. Design is inaugurated as both client and designer meet to negotiate and discuss 'what' to project. After the first meeting with the client, the design expert becomes responsible for the development of the project (the 'how' to achieve the 'what') in physical absence through the use of "figures" (Gentes, 2017), and to involve the client in possibly new or unexpected developments to generate new materiality and meanings. In co-design situations, there may be no commission nor a clearly defined client to

understand a phenomenon is strongly related, he argues, with the intentionality of the study more than when the researcher is engaged to explain it (Stake, 1995, p. 53; *italics from the author*).

start. Still, the design work is oriented by some figure of the user or recipient of a future design. Especially in situations where expert designers choose to work with specific publics, they may know about who they will work for and with before the encounter. In this view, design is inaugurated as both users and designers meet in absence or co-presence. Still the process of co-design evolves substantially in co-presence as an open-ended negotiation of ‘what’ to project and ‘how’. Co-design evolves not through figures but through the actual presence of the users as participants in design. If physical absence in conventional design is constitutive of the design event what is the implication of physical absence when we are working with the user as a co-designer, not just a figure in the process? How does the eventual absence of design experts plays out for the diffuse designers? Does the design event become suspended in time? How are presences and absences, places and timings negotiated? Does co-design articulate the same performance of conventional designing but in a quantitative and qualitative expanded scales? Elucidating the “mediality” of design in our cases, what is crucial, for now is that the concept of the “feedback loop” is a possible way to explore the expansion of “where” that occurs in social designing. While design is interpreted through the spatial lens as a plane which produces something tangibly different from itself, through the concepts of Fischer-Lichte we can thoroughly focus on how the design event itself unfolds by all the subjects and objects involved in a rhythm of absences and presences (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 23).

Converging the spatial lens with lens of the experiential lens built with Fischer-Lichte, grasping the mediality of design makes visible an important contribution of the binocular of indiscipline. Habitually, design is understood as a practice that mediates between a goal and an output. The convention describes the role of diffuse designers and expert designers as mainly instrumental. Whether in design or co-design situations all participants engage in heightened states of attention to everything that relates or is connected to achieving the goal that motivated their encounter in the first place. The journey of design to transform some situation into *this* or *that* preferred one is mainly “non-aesthetic”. By describing interactions that are destabilizing, although, ones in which destabilization means the opening of a design space for change and transformation, the binocular affords another point of view. The journey of design can be seen as “aesthetic” wherein the journey is the goal. The implication is that we are able to see design happening as a “live” event where bodies and things encounter each other and relate in the present. Through the binocular of indiscipline, design is seen as a whole set of interactions thereby revealing all the unexpected things that occur and circulate in the space. Between participants it reveals all the becomes eventually condensed, discarded or even expanded by the goal to achieve or because of something else which can also be traced. How does seeing design as an “aesthetic” situation changes what it means

to design? What is the implication of considering the process of design more important than the goal that inaugurated it in the first place? Can a design process be inaugurated by or through something else, similar to performance? Perceiving design practice from the perspectives and concepts of “the in-discipline of design” the “aesthetics of the performative” we capture design in terms of the window and boundaries of “who” makes it more than a process and the results. In this view, the binocular works as a mindset to open up different understandings of how communities and design experts make things together. It asks how the social encounter between them happens and evolves as a practice that can be called design but that can manifest itself differently or unexpectedly. What precisely happens to make it unique and unrepeatable: in the mediality, the materiality, the semiocity or the aestheticity of design? What are these different social ways of designing that still belong to the discipline but that are still invisible or not yet known, as we have hypothesised with Foucault?

Doing design research while performing a professional design role, or in turn being a design expert while having a particular research care for social design, this research approaches Kohn’s anthropological engagement with the Ávila Runa. The author’s co-presence in each everyday situation in the forest has some resonance with our design engagements, hence the way we retrospectively attempt to re-enact and interpret them. Kohn’s ethnography grows from attention to how humans and non-human interact in non-linguistic ways, that is, through signs beyond the symbolic or what is conventionally only human. Arguing from a post-humanistic perspective about “the ways in which we have treated humans as exceptional—and thus as fundamentally separate from the rest of the world” (Kohn, 2013, p. 7), the author takes us beyond what is visible but without abandoning the visual, rather transforming its experience. Taking the fact that everybody designs seriously changes things.⁵⁸ For the process of design and its results how diffuse designers *design* matters. Besides having underexplored dimensions, entering the diffuse side of design can timely move us beyond the discourses and practices that continue to posit the design discipline as a separate world from the worlds it is about. Thinking with Fischer-Lichte and Kohn frames another mindset which plays a crucial role in the binocular to understand how design is always, in some way or another, embedded in the gestures of non-experts or in unexpected relations and how we might do design work with this fact (Kohn, 2013, p. 42). To be clear about the contribution of Kohn to the binocular it happens twofold. First it enables to capture diffuse designers’ ways of designing that emerge in direct or oblique forms of communicating and interacting with design experts.

58 Here we are paraphrasing Kohn, from the original: “How diffuse designers design matters for design experts in ways that beyond having underexplored properties can move crucially and timely move our practices beyond the ways we discursively portrayed as separate from the worlds they represent.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 9)

Complementing Fischer-Lichte in the experiential lens, Kohn help us move the observation closer to how social design grows not in spite of but in the continuity of recognizable patterns, habits and conventional ways of the design discipline. This is how indiscipline is not anti-discipline but a discipline that is expanded following Foucault's premise. From this, the second contribution turns to how the visible beyond the visual transforms the discipline of visual communication design beyond its conventions and habits. Coming back to the discussion of the visual conundrum and the notion of "form-acts" afforded by Redström, it's with Kohn's notion of "form" that we can see clearly how graphic design was never outside but always and already enveloped with and within advertising. The list of formats mentioned is a sign of a conjoined "form" in its "effortless efficacy" as its character propagates through designers and the text of both manifestos (Kohn, 2013, p. 21). This points to the question of whether different patterns or forms of design can be set and propagate between participants who depart from different premises who/which are not advertising nor industrial or commercial purposes. What happens in the encounter with others that always unleashes the same pattern of graphic design in visual communication designers? What might cause us to act differently? How can eventual transformations be recognized as a graphic design act and not the end of design? Addressing the lack of design research in the field of visual communication design, this research attempts a more capacious discourse about possible social turns because these continue for the most part to be constituted by the very advertising mindset we have historically aimed to call into question and emancipate from. Therefore, articulating a confrontation of graphic design with itself, the binocular helps us to rethink the "form" and "form-acts" of the discipline differently. When using the binocular to disrupt visual "form-acts", indiscipline does not grow from opposition or critique to the discipline rather from attention to how the visual can manifest itself through a constellation of unexpected others and how it emerges conspicuously in different ways of being and becoming visible, seen, visual, hence, present, represented, participating, designing (Kohn, 2013, p. 14).

In sum, Kohn's concepts and perspectives can elucidate how all design is social but not all design is social design. In experiential terms, the author complements the spatial processes of "projective abduction", accounted by Gentes as emblematic of design, with an awareness of other processes that may also take place in/as design before or as other kinds of indiscipline. For instances, the fact that any conception of something, however provisional, begins by indifference rather than shock. Moreover, the fact that abductive processes can propagate into the future not by the fact of destabilization but by the fact of their repetition as a "form" – which coincides with the form of designing. The author supports the experiential lens especially in explaining visual phenomena in depth and establishing sensorial

or sensible differences that can make a difference in making visual things *versus* making things visible, designing appearance *versus* designing presence. In sum, the role of Kohn's points of view will become clear as we engage with the real design events of this research. The author permeates the whole analysis as if we became another with thinking through his accounted experiences.

Aiming to not venture so far in this chapter, the questions and ideas raised are not formal research questions but departure points to set the binocular and move on to the next part of this thesis where theory and practice meet, and unexpected things may happen. In summary, the binocular of indiscipline combines the friction between the idea that all design is social and that not all design is social design. The underlying assumption in our hypothesis is that social design is not a matter of motivations but of structural design performance. If design is a socialization process from a spatial view, therein lies the performative potentials for different form-acts of socialization that beyond conventional understandings of the design discipline may takes us to unexpected places yet ones where we may recognize indiscipline as instances where/when life and design are continuous with each other performing the social fictions and utopias we have been envisioning and some of us struggling for a long time.

In adopting the spatial lens, socialization coincides with the design process. From a more operational point of view, presuming the experience is always and already found in interactions, we tend towards the happening inquiring medial conditions and particularities: Who are the two groups participating? In specific relevant moments, who is present and absent and what are participants doing? What generates under-determination and who participates in it, how and why? What kind of tensions happen? Is there a pattern or form, or form-act of socializing through design or designing through socialization? In adopting the viewpoint of the triad Foucault—Fischer-Lichte—Kohn, the experiential lens works as a filter to turn the ordinary into extraordinary. By presuming that there may be more forms and modes of indiscipline within design, hence different forms and modes *to indiscipline* (as a verb) design practices towards becoming socially engaged, it questions: what if this is not an everyday design situation but a social design event? How are participants performing design? How are doings and interactions different from conventional or normal design practice? What generates difference? Where/when is the point of expansion and when/where it is non-design? The experiential lens intentionally articulates a deviated look to move us beyond our conventional notions of what is design and non-design and to see the situations for themselves what they are and potentially already may be.

Holding on to the binocular of indiscipline we might catch glimpses of an expanded discipline of design where different social modes and visual communications forms are possible.

2.6 Indiscipline as a device: research as an inventive learning space

2.6.1 Indiscipline is an inventive method

Foreseeing what the binocular may bring, indiscipline is not only the foundation of our hypothesis it is also what Celia Lury and Nina Wakeford (2012) call an “inventive method”.

Within social and cultural studies, inventive methods, according to the authors, are not necessarily new nor inventiveness is a quality that can be given to a method in advance before its use (2012, p. 6). Inventiveness, they argue, “is to be found in the relation between two moments: the addressing of a method – an anecdote, a probe, a category – to a specific problem, and the capacity of what emerges in the use of that method to change the problem.” (Lury and Wakeford, 2012, p. 7) For Lury and Wakeford, inventive devices are “methods or means by which the social world is not only ted, but may also be engaged” (2012, p. 6) To clarify, the authors point to three main characteristics:

- 1) Inventive methods are always oriented towards the production of difference. Inventiveness is not intrinsic but emerges when in use-time a method can enable some unexpected effect to be understood not as a matter of the ineffectiveness of the device rather as an opportunity to open up and change the problem as it is being addressed. It’s a reflective capacity of the method in the same act of using it that allows an experimental, or inventive, approach to research. (Lury and Wakeford, 2012, 6-7) They enable the happening of the real to be ted by performing “the expansion of the present, in which there is an ongoing maximization of the agencies involved in social life” (Lury and Wakeford, 2012, p. 5).
- 2) Inventive methods entail situatedness as a relation not a position which makes them open rather than finished or closed devices. As the authors argue, “an inventive method addresses a specific problem, and is adapted in use in relation to that specificity” (2012, p. 11). The method is not universal, but changes and differences are what enable the possibility for its repeated use. Without assuming a single fixed relation between concepts and practices or between epistemology and ontology, it’s the multiple results generated suggesting possible adaptations of the tool, instrument or technique that makes them “in part, alienable from [those] specific problems or situations, able to be used in multiple contexts and continually introduced into new ones” (2012, p. 10)
- 3) Inventive methods highlight their medium specificity and adaptability to lure reality into bringing forth its own problems (2012, p. 21). In other words, methods are made to give form and figure out specific problems. Those which

provide an awareness that we are in *medias res*, in the middle of things, addressing the excessive specificity and complexity of the real, still enable us to acknowledge the sensory plenitude afforded for knowledge and action, those are the inventive methods (2012, p. 19). The media properties of a medium or device that is inventive makes it “explicitly oriented towards an action of the open-endedness of the social world.” (2012, p. 2) In other words, an inventive method “not only reports events, but acts on them [...] they are something that happens that makes things happen” (Lury and Wakeford, 2012, p. 2)

Built upon the concrete events of a personal design practice, experience and retrospective reflection are ways of knowing in this thesis. But to take design engagements for objects of research especially when articulated as happenings of indiscipline, that is, different design manifestations than what we are used to address as the classical or conventional design situations, is particularly difficult. Being in the middle of a neighbourhood living the whole experience of designing with people, how can we begin to address dimensions of indiscipline as a difference in full actuality when indiscipline is part of the process of design experienced by all participants?

Emerging as a study to better capture, understand and represent the social construct of design, indiscipline is an inventive method not only oriented to describe cases of design practice but to act on them and expand their possibilities.

Drawing from Lury and Wakeford, by amplifying situations of indiscipline through the binocular of indiscipline, the purpose is to capture unexpected things that happen in design processes seeing them not only as complex, contradictory and uncertain, but also as everyday, routine and ongoing, as something with which design is necessarily engaged (Lury and Wakeford, 2012, p. 6). The spatial lens is set to observe indiscipline as an event of design always and already contingent and social. Simultaneously, the binocular attempts to lure the situation into posing its own questions. Expanding the view to the possibilities of being and becoming socially engaged in the same design act or scene, the experiential lens aims to observe design differently, hence, to produce a different practice and capture reflectively what emerges from that lensed different perspective.

Setting the tone for an experimental inquiry, similar to an inventive method, the binocular is oriented towards describing “the indiscipline of design” (Gentes, 2017) but also to engage and enable the happening of other kinds of indiscipline and of socially engaged design acts and interactions potentially already there. Foreseeing multiple effects in using the binocular, the device is applied to interpret different contexts understanding how knowledge can grow in relation to different sites, never exhausted but always in expansion. The repeated use of the binocular to interpret not a single case but four cases of design where indiscipline manifested, or cases of indiscipline that can be seen as design situations, enables the inventiveness

of indiscipline to flourish as both a concept and practice. The tensions between spatial and experiential perspectives afforded by different authors, moreover the background ideas we bring from historical and contemporary debates about the social in design, not only frame a device, the device is itself the thesis of this thesis. Another way of combining these or introduce another indiscipline would most certainly result in a different look, different method, different research. The binocular of indiscipline is a specific medium with specific properties made for and by this research. Still it is a general framework that can contribute to open up different theoretical compositions and devices of indiscipline to indiscipline the social turn in design, what it is and what it can be.

In summary, indiscipline, in this research, is a way of seeing and acting in the design world differently. Within and beyond the settings of our journey, it is an inventive concept and method which articulates research as a reflective and experimental space oriented towards the open-endedness of the discipline of design.

2.6.2 Research design through indiscipline

The close relationship between theory and practice, in this thesis, implies an undisciplined research design.

Recalling the journey so far accounted in this outline (see Diagram 7), we set off to research social design principles and practices through a comprehensive literature review. Aiming to research how designers work we departed from the premise that social design is a field where we would engage to study the practice of specific socially engaged designers through qualitative interviews and exemplary cases from their practices. To begin mapping some of these protagonists of social design we looked through written records the terms associated with socially and politically engaged practices and found a multitude of actors working with different ethos in different contexts. Turning to our familiar context we challenged our students to trace social design projects and meet with “citizen designers” in Portugal to interview and document one case from their practice. In this experiment, something unexpected occurs. Design is a living thing is a phrase that shifts our attention to a number of projects “I” had already participated as a designer and that were precisely about articulating the social turn working with different communities and groups about expanded social and political issues. This shift of attention occurred at the same time we encountered Fischer-Lichte’s book. At this point we entered a kind of retrospection about some projects we had engaged and proceed to an introspection of the new ones which were unfolding. Exploring in depth the “aesthetics of the performative” these design experiences became the empirical work in this thesis. This decision marked a temporary move to a different space. Engaging with CODE – The Codesign Research Group that

was where we encountered Foucault's notion of "indiscipline". The pocket of time spent in another place with diverse people who were unfamiliar to this research was the most inventive and speculative of all. Being a design expert engaged in the study of socially engaged practices in a country where these kinds of practices are emergent and for the most part marginal (or perhaps scarcely visible) entails an inherent critic to the situated design regimes that prevail and endure. Although, indiscipline did not only represent a situated perspective about social design. Drawing from Celia Lury and Nina Wakeford (2014) who argue "situatedness is understood not as a position but as a relation" (2014, p. 14) in CODE we began use indiscipline as a device realising how explicitly the empirical work and research so far still enveloped the visual communication discipline albeit manifested in different ways. Finding in Kohn's reading the original motivation and genesis of this research, indiscipline became a main concept to give coherence to the entire research and work journey, from the outset. Coming back to practice and to write the thesis, we encounter "the in-discipline of design" (Gentes, 2017). The concept developed by Gentes to rethink design as a "field of tensions and compositions" revealed our notion to be more deeply related with the social turn and the conceptualization of the moves and movements of the design discipline to engage with different motivations, different sites and different partners to design with. In our view, indiscipline was not a stable concept and emerged in glimpses. That is to say, we experienced indiscipline as different events – not a process – within different design processes at different times, places, and more importantly performed with and by those who were not necessarily design experts. Seeing indiscipline as a design process that occurs regardless of the presence of design experts, as Gentes accounts, to acknowledge how our indiscipline highlighted the gestures and actions of communities and diffuse designers as important in the happenings of design as those of the design experts became the foundation for this thesis. Through Gentes's perspectives, we were able to clarify that our contribution to the design discourse about the social and about transforming practices of design from within is beyond a matter of how design experts work but mainly about how diffuse designers design. By "design work" we understand something done or made, as a discrete solution, and/or to an activity in the sense of a task or effort, hence the conditions, circumstances, behaviours in which things can be done or made, hence are designed. Put in relation to "how", it formulates that this research focuses on the study of the designing process or *modus operandi* of designers, rather than the sole focus on designed results. Putting the locus on "how designers work" and while capturing potential, emergent and transformative happenings of 'how diffuse designers design' can raise fundamental questions for the design discipline crucial to a history of moves and movements towards the social but also to what can be regarded as an expanded aesthetics, ethos

and politics of social design acts for the future. Instead of replacing any notion, we departed from Gentes's understanding to expand indiscipline and arrive at different understandings of design as a social practice. Culminating in this thesis, this document is an attempt to do justice to our encounters with the social and with indiscipline, and to the ways we came to see design anew practiced in different social terms from different social perspectives.

In this brief account, instead of a pure study, research unfolds as a spatial and experiential reflection through action. Underlying a condition of indiscipline, of becoming transformed by the encounters and design events that happen throughout, this qualitative research can be regarded as following the "research through design" methodology.

The most current definition, according to Danny Godin and Mithra Zahedi (2014) describes "research through design" as the closest kind of research to actual design work.⁵⁹ Focusing on the conception and production of artefacts or processes or experimenting with new materials the approach "transcends inquiries to describe 'how something is' and focuses on 'how it will be' as well as 'what this future preferred state should be'." (Godin and Zahedi, 2014, p. 1671) In epistemological terms, this approach is not so straight forward because it is subject to ontological aspects or the settings and circumstances through which research is done through the design process and its eventual outcomes (Godin and Zahedi, 2014, p. 1668). There is no precise model therefore research through design can have many faces. Still, the authors suggest turning to "grounded theory" and "action research" for inspiration and to understand more thoroughly the epistemological contributions and limitations of this approach (Godin and Zahedi, 2014, p. 1671; Frayling, 1993).

The methodology of this thesis can be regarded as research through design because knowledge is produced by engaging in design practice as both a medium and object of inquiry. As we have seen, the binocular of indiscipline is an inventive method of observation and interpretation of the spatial and experiential situations and movements of design towards what can be seen as different social kinds of design practice, actions and things. Still, the methodology we perform is not entirely research through design. Design research does not co-evolve with design practice, rather what we do is a retrospective analysis of a series of experiences that provided glimpses of the reality of indiscipline and socially engaged design we aim to study. In this view, our research approach is more closely related to an ethnography⁶⁰ of design reflecting from a first-person experience on events

⁵⁹ Drawing from Frayling and Findeli, Godin and Zahedi (2014, p. 1667) describe Research through design as "an approach to scientific inquiry that takes advantage of the unique insights gained through design practice to provide a better understanding of complex and future-oriented issues in the design field."

⁶⁰ Our notion of ethnography in relation to design practices comes from the understanding

and situations rather than reflecting-in-action. More specifically in regard to the orientation to study how diffuse designers work and how that can contribute to different understandings of design and indiscipline, retrospection can be seen as a limitation. Relying on sensory experience and personal insights of the researcher without concrete data collected through qualitative methods such as inquiries or interviews to evaluate what people actually perceived about situations and how they might explain their actions or behaviours in design, can be seen as a matter of how design experts think about how others design. Being conscious and cautious about the limitations this brings to the research, the 'I' position nevertheless can be seen as a relation that enables a specific view i.e. a particular kind of research and knowledge contribution. To clarify, by choosing not to look at what people say but actually insist to focus on what they did, what actions did they perform in reality when designing things with us, the research and its contribution is inventive. Our way of researching through retrospective engagements with design practice is premised on what we currently know about design (from experience and memory) as a conventional discipline towards an expanded understanding of what design can be through the actual experience of how people performed design in relation to us. In other words, we observe the gestures and things made and done by people choosing to interpret them not as mere contextual effects of the situation rather as unexpected design actions with potentials for expanding the practice and understanding of the discipline of design. In this view, we theorize through retrospective observation what actually happened in the field as people and designers engaged to design something together. This is the reason we found performance studies and anthropological inquiry strikingly relevant to set the binocular of indiscipline. Moreover, the reason why indiscipline emerged as a kind of interpretative schema or method to position and re-position an inventive hypothesis during inventive research.

In epistemological terms, this research then is akin to "action research" yet not precisely engaged in modifying reality through design nor in evaluating a design process and its results (Frayling, 1993; Godin and Zahedi, 2014). Our approach is concerned with expanding the knowledge and understanding of design through observing and processing differences in the interpretation of design practices with potentials to modify current theories and practices of the discipline. To note,

articulated by Joachim Halse (Halse et al., 2010, p. 148) who argues: "Design and ethnography are both concerned with subject matters that are not given. Faced with innumerable specific characteristics of a concrete situation, the researcher (whether oriented towards design or ethnography or both) is forced to impose some kind of interpretive scheme that enables further ordering. The designer must conceive a design that will lead to this or that particular product; the ethnographer must conceive an empirical phenomenon that is bounded enough that it lends itself to a representation of social reality. For both the designer and the ethnographer, it is necessary to position and re-position the issues at hand in order to establish principles of relevance for knowledge until a working hypothesis is discovered or invented. This is theorizing through practice."

besides accounting for a practical journey, we also provide a specific reading of that journey that shifts and grows. Indiscipline is a device that acts to give different understandings of past situations of practice by the ways it is set to bring to the foreground the bodies, things and phenomena that destabilized the practices as we experienced them but that through conventional knowledge remained latent or dormant memories. Through indiscipline, as an inventive device that causes something to happen, these became alive as design things. Regarded as a space, or site, wherein different forms and modes of the indiscipline of design are researched through a mixture of approaches, this research is a “laboratory” (Binder et al., 2011) whereby experimental reflection on factual experiences accounts possible movements and happenings of social design.⁶¹ To clarify, a series of cases form the basis of this research to observe and understand indiscipline in the real-world environments in which it occurred. Addressing a set of different cases is an attempt to mirror the ways theory and practice occurred in parts not all at once, not as a whole, hence not in one specific design situation. The deliberate throwntogetherness⁶² into different transdisciplinary sites and social arenas brought forth partial, networked and multi-vocal insights, questions and arguments about design that appeared recurrently at different times flourishing indiscipline as the discipline of design showing different sides. While these may be too specifically embedded in relationships of where and who, therefore in the particular design practices that brought them into being, adopting the “methodology of the lab” (Binder et al., 2011) is to live the possibilities themselves. Each image of indiscipline reveals some of the concrete aspects of indiscipline as a whole while it also points to how indiscipline is an open whole that can grow to become different or differentiated in design terms. Researching through design enables to critically explore and describe different versions and happenings of indiscipline as possible turns, moves and movements of design to the social. In this view, this research approximates the epistemology of “Grounded Theory” wherein theories and methods are discovered and constructed in constant interaction with the object of study (Flick, 2005, p. 42). It is an approach that is highly oriented

61 Following the constructive approach, the methodology of the lab, as Binder et al. (2011, p. 21) argue, entails “a commitment to the exploration of the possible rather the factual”.

62 The concept of “throwtness” is used by Thomas Darwin (2010, p. 30) to argue the complexity of the problems addressed by designers is actually intensified by the experience of addressing them through participatory practices which call for individual and collective resilience. In this sense, the concept borrowed from Heidegger serves to capture both the disorientation and the sense of possibility that are experienced by participants in being in the middle of transforming a situation into a preferred one. In the field of geography, Doreen Massey used the term “throwtogetherness” to describe “the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here-and-now (itself drawing on a history and a geography of thens and theres); and a negotiation which must take place within and between both human and nonhuman” (2005, p. 140). We choose to adopt Massey’s term because it considers not only the action but what comes from that action which is more accurate considering the field of participatory design as space of resilience through and by negotiation.

toward interpretation, in the sense, theories act as forms of presenting empirical data, hence, become versions of reality (Flick, 2005, p. 46). Operating as tentative versions of describing, explaining and exploring phenomena, theories undergo continuous elaboration, evaluation and revision, therefore, theories are not fixed and closed representations of phenomena, rather possible versions, perspectives or ways of seeing phenomena (Flick, 2005, p. 46). In grounded theory, points Godin and Zahedi (2014) the responsibility of demonstrating validity and rigour is on:

“the researcher’s ability to use what is being observed: theoretical sensitivity. Theoretical sensitivity is defined as “the investigator’s ability to use personal and professional experiences and the literature to see the research situation and data in new ways and exploit the potential of the data for developing theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, cited by Hall & Callery, 2001, p. 263) and should be demonstrated in a RtD publication or report.” (Zahedi, p. 1663)” (Godin and Zahedi, 2014, p. 1671)

As we describe, explain and explore in retrospection different forms of indiscipline through our cases of design practice, “grounded theory” corresponds to the amplification of the specific questions, arguments and insights that each object of study raises on its own terms. Although, our theory is not entirely grounded in the cases, immanent from the cases or shifting through the cases. The way we describe, explain and explore the cases is by using indiscipline as a device so the theories and theory of this research are not spontaneous live constructions, rather they are grounded in both the cases and the analytical frame. The binocular of indiscipline cannot be subtracted out from the observations even if the observations of indiscipline can shift through the real happenings in the case. Likewise, the case cannot be subtracted out from the interpretation of indiscipline that may also change and grow the binocular of indiscipline. On the other hand, the visual communication design background frames a specific perspective (or “mindset” drawing from Redström) that likely affects the analysis and interpretation of the cases through the binocular that cannot be subtracted out as well. Regarding how and why this research through design is not a pure practice of “action research” nor “grounded theory”, brings forth the limitation of this study to give a comprehensive view of social design possibilities foreseeing an incomplete version or theory of indiscipline. Still the limitations, if seen as possible relations established with a research topic, rather than static research positions, open up a design space for expansion. If this research is composed by a set of possible forms of indiscipline then it may be the starting point for an inventory of possible and situated indiscipline(s), that may never be fixed or complete, hence always open to the inventive possibilities of indiscipline itself as a hypothesis and method that can be used and transformed by others through their experiences.

To conclude, the methodological aims and relations of this research postulates that to mobilize indisciplin as a method is to design and research in indisciplin. We are part of wanting to expand design's vocabulary and language as we learn to talk about and understand what we do. Tracing movements of indisciplin as possible activations for others, this laboratory of social design does not offer any recipes or how to's to change your own design practices. This research is neither a manual of social design, nor a visual communication design guide for mounting participatory engagements. By interrogating ways of being and becoming social in and by design, we aim an actualization of design knowledge and designerly ways of knowing that can combine past utopias, current actions with new future horizons. Especially situated in the threshold between all design is social and not all design is social design, this research is a provocation and proposal to all its interested readers: to take the design into your own hands and make indisciplin the principle and practice for design futures.

The binocular of indiscipline

Seen by both lens

design is an “aesthetic” event that coincides with the social interactions (and the transformations that happen in terms of corporality, thingness, spatiality, tonality, temporality) that brings it into being

situations or images of indiscipline

moves to/that indiscipline

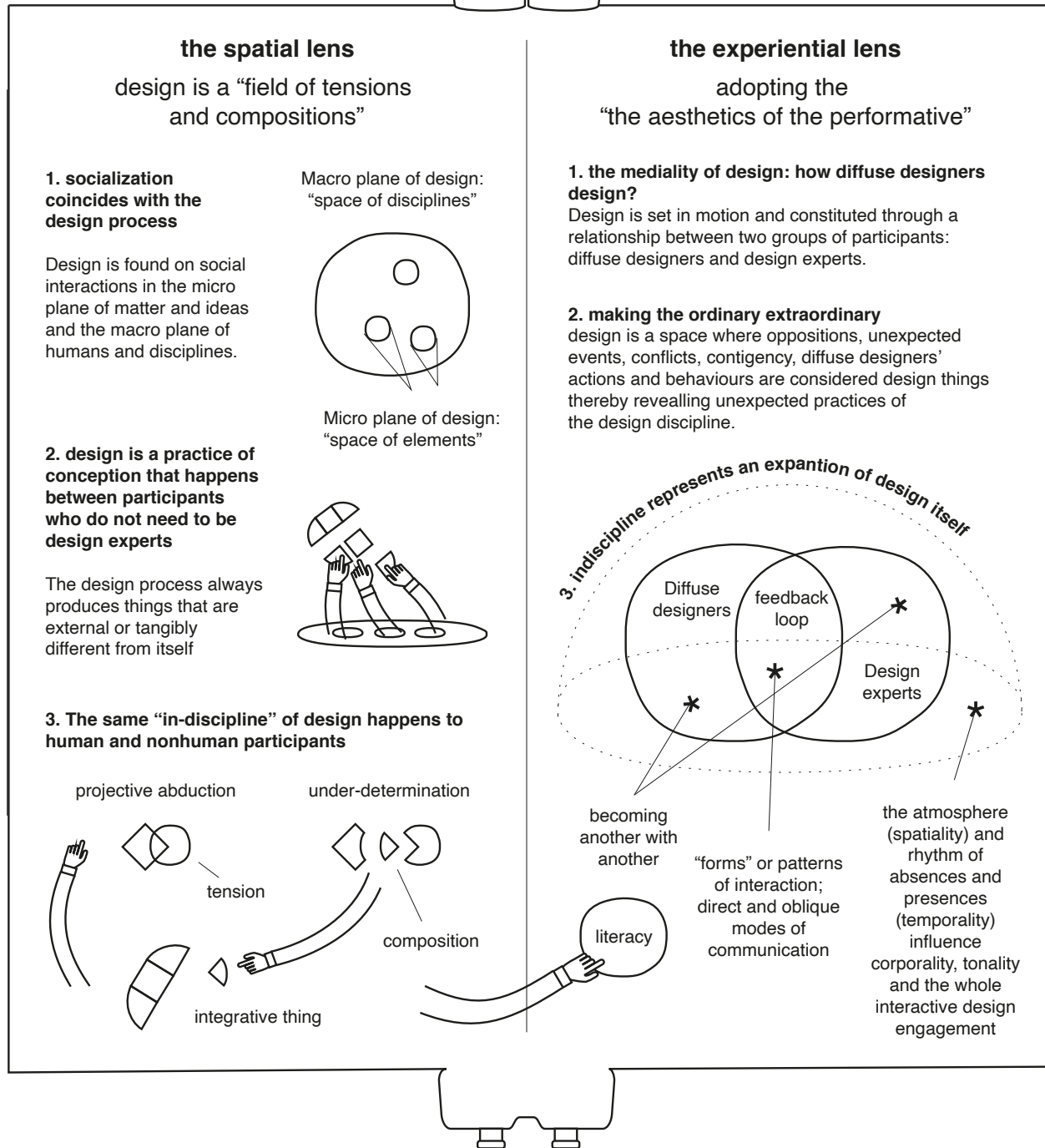


Diagrama 4. Summarising the binocular of indiscipline.

Former Research Design

Social Design principles and practices: exploring how designers work in this realm

1. unexpected events

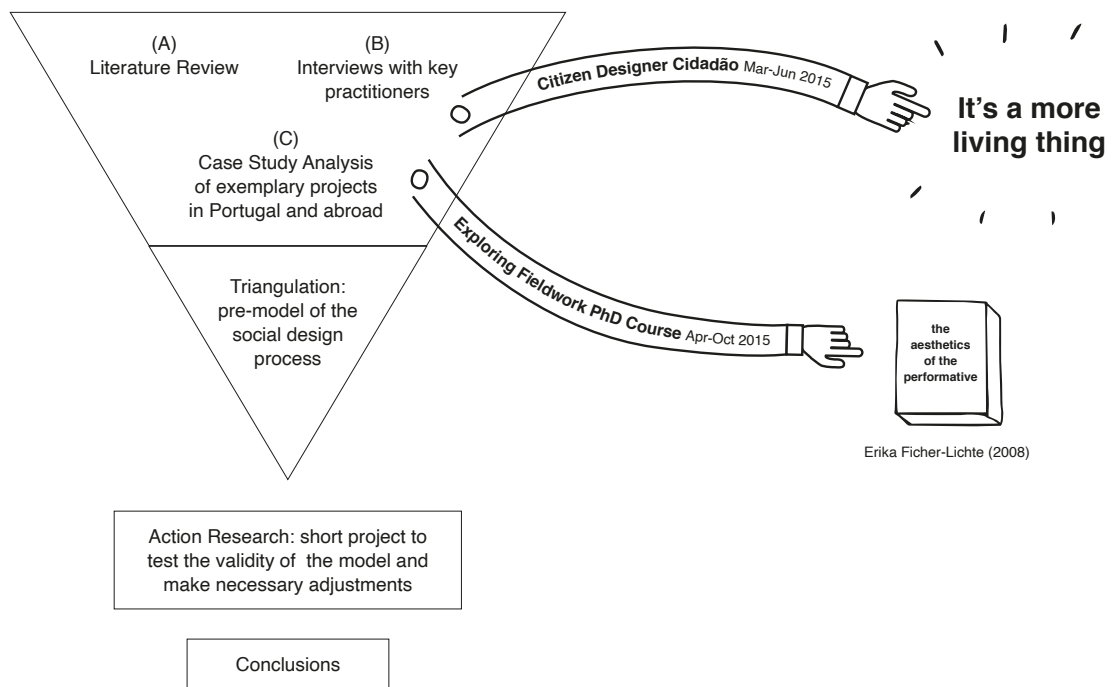


Diagram 5. Former Research Design

Research Design

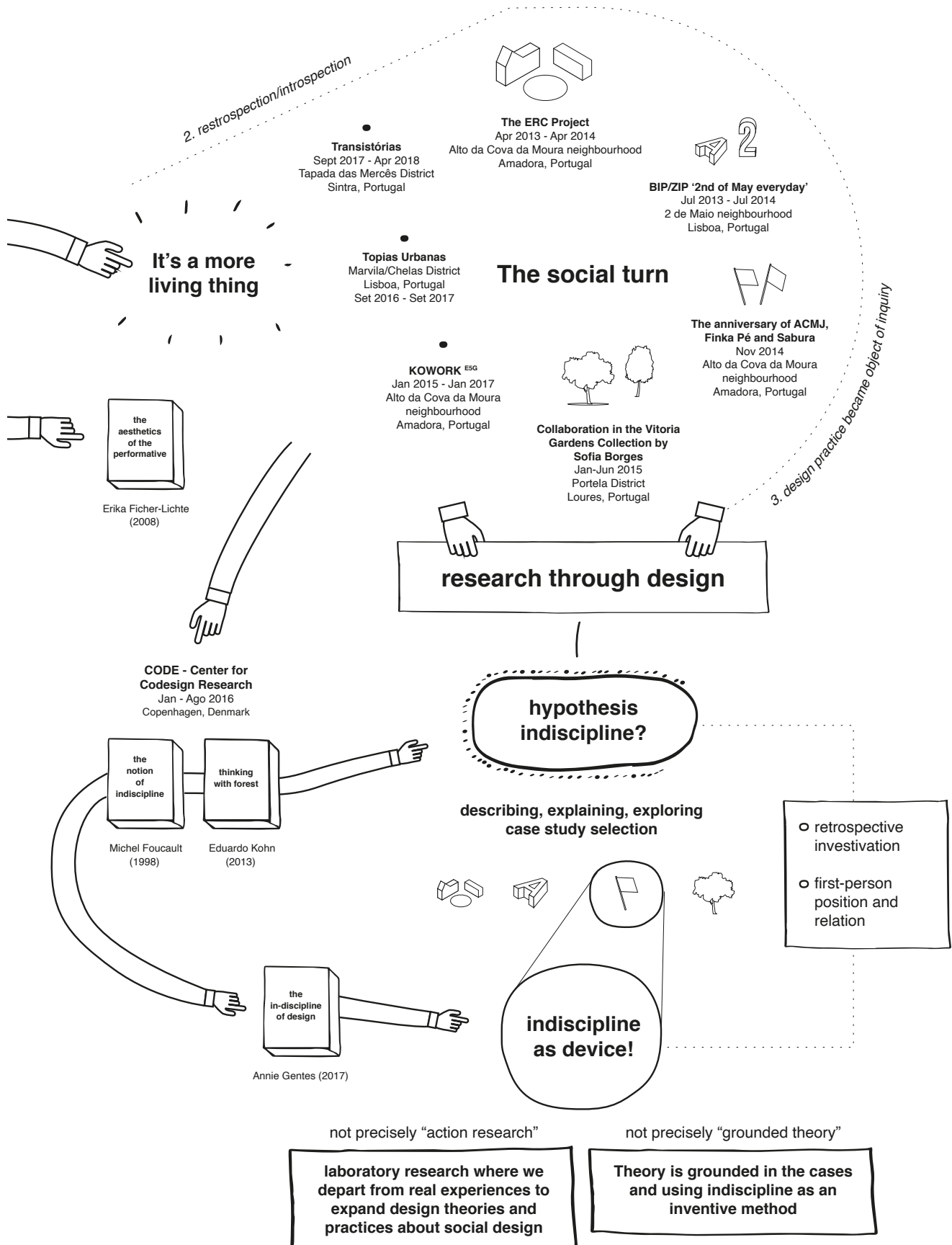


Diagram 6. Research Design.

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INDISCIPLINE

Body

3. Research Body

Through the binocular of indiscipline: experiencing design anew

Images of indiscipline: an introductory note

The binocular of indiscipline could have been used to explore in depth a single case of indiscipline. Although we decided to expand the field to consider different episodes where our habitual assumptions about what visual communication design is and can be were destabilized. In this part, we focus on exploring four design engagements wherein tensions, dilemmas and conflicts occurred and the experience was as if participants found themselves without discipline (see Research Design Summary Diagrams).

Common to these episodes of destabilization is how the undisciplined situation or experience was generated mainly by the intervention of diffuse designers. Exploring specifically the gestures, actions or events performed by diffuse designers qualifies this research as a study of entities in the line with Robert Stake's (1995) approach to defining case studies. By describing and explaining how and why tensions occurred in different design settings and engagements, however, is what provoked us to see them as cases of indiscipline in the first place (see Research Outline). Adopting the case study methodology in this research is closer to the approach articulated by Robert K. Yin (1994). According to the author, the case study methodology is recommended when "a 'how' and 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control" (Yin, 1994, p. 9) A primary characteristic is that the case study methodology follows "a logic of design" in the sense that it is a chosen strategy grounded on circumstances and research problems rather than a convention or ideology to be used or followed whatever the context (Yin, 1994, p. 12). As Yin argues, a case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." (1994, p. 13) In this perspective, adopting such methodology requires that a theoretical framework may be developed beforehand whether the approach is exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Yin, 1994, p. 32). As the author argues, theory is a crucial support to define research design furthermore to be able to generalize the results of the case study (Yin, 1994, p. 32).

To briefly summarize, in the exploratory approach, the purpose is to examine in-depth a phenomenon in open-ended way or without clear agendas, instead letting hypothesis and goals emerge from process for further inquiry. The descriptive mode consists in tracing and analysing the essence of a phenomenon and its real-life context. The explanatory approach relates to tracing the conditional, operational or casual how and why links which instead of addressing situations as mere incidents or spurious relationships (Yin, 1994).

Choosing to adopt the case study methodology from Yin's perspective, our questions focus mainly on 'how' and 'why' happenings of indiscipline have occurred. The approach is to first address them as cases of destabilization and then see or grasp them, through the binocular of indiscipline, as potentials expansions of design in its possibilities instead of mere situated accidents or irreducible complexities (see outline). In other words, our purpose is to describe how and why destabilization happens and in which context, to explain how and why diffuse designers are involved and to explore how and why we can see the same happening as an indiscipline, hence a potential experience of social design. In this sense, the case study methodology in this research serves two purposes: 1) to reach a deeper comprehension of the design circumstances and conditions that can give expression to an experience and practice of indiscipline, and, 2) to explore in depth how and why indiscipline, in its situated ways, can frame possibly and potentially different social spaces and experiences of design compared to the conventional discipline (Figure 2).

But the case study methodology is used although with the necessary adjustments to our project. The events are not contemporary so we are doing a retrospective study of past events, moreover, the direct involvement of the "I" who investigates as one or the main designer in situations implies that informal manipulation of cases at the time of the experiences may have occurred. These two aspects intensify the entanglement between phenomenon and context by placing this research in the field of ethnographic studies making use of close-up detailed observations of the real-world which be confused at times with the world of the investigator who sees and interprets things in specific ways. Nevertheless, in contrast with ethnographic research which "attempt[s] to avoid prior commitment to any theoretical model" (Yin, 1994, p. 14) we are committed to a theoretical framework which we built precisely to approach the cases. In this part, real-world events are to be examined through the binocular of indiscipline which contains the basis for analysing undisciplined moments and the question of "what if" this is indiscipline? While the design engagements open up a wide range of problematics due to their real-life complexity and situated circumstances of how specific groups interact in certain ways to design things together, the binocular of indiscipline is the theoretical framework through which we focus on accounting the specificities of indiscipline

and make sense of indiscipline towards how and why it may represent a social design form. The exploratory question of ‘what if’, which may turn the case study into an experiment, is still not divorced from the actual phenomenon nor the real context of where and when things took place. Rather it is through description and explanation that we explore alternative views or different options already within the case. To highlight, this is a case study of the indiscipline of design purposefully treating undisciplined episodes as inventive spaces of the design discipline. This is our hypothesis (see outline). In this view, what drives this research is not validation rather to capture what emerges from this re-conceptualization that can be generalizable to make theoretical propositions about social design. The goal of this research is to expand and generalize indiscipline as a theory (making analytical generalisation) revealing its inventive potentials for growth as an analytical framework for socially engaged design work.

More specifically about the structure of this part, each chapter corresponds to a specific design engagement wherein one or more cases of indiscipline occurred. Each begins with a full description of the design engagement or what we call a ‘journey through pictures’ which attempts to effectively make visible ‘where’ it took place; ‘who’ were participants; ‘what’ were activities, actions or gestures done or performed by which or whom; ‘what’ were the things made, present or that appeared in the situation; and finally, ‘what’ was the temporality of the event in relation the ultimate purposes of design accounting how intentions unfolded over time.

After these full visual accounts, wherein the ‘how’ of the engagement is how the world presents itself, we move to use the binocular of indiscipline. Through the spatial and experiential lens, we essentially describe the episodes of destabilization and explain how and why those phenomena involved specific diffuse designers. The approach is to explore each lens separately or in some cases simultaneously when double vision affords the perception of depth or a more sensible and comprehensive understanding of a specific situation. As we begin to make visible or bring to the foreground specific relationships between growing webs of bodies, things and spaces that were implicit or latent in the professional design gaze, that is when amplifying specific gestures, actions, anecdotes, or events we explore indiscipline as a possible experience of the social in and by design within the particular design engagement. At this point we formulate from the case study a specific argument which we capture into a single main claim. This claim corresponds to the main title of the chapter and represents the specific image or side of indiscipline generated through the specific cases analysed within the design engagement. Each chapter concludes and summarises the case in a diagram.

Each of image of indiscipline is a very rough and incomplete approximation of the complex whole it represents; however, it should not be seen as a fixed or static

result. Rather, from the exploratory approach of the case study methodology, it should be seen as a potential insight for further inquiry, hence to be discussed in the next part and even to be explored further along in future research. In this sense, the four insights about indiscipline and social design are themselves “living thoughts” or “living theories” (Kohn, 2013) representing our learning through the binocular of indiscipline and growth into knowledge performed by this thesis. The alignment of the cases follows a logic of progression that relates to the empirical work and not precisely the analysis. In other words, we could have arranged the four insights in different order and arrive at similar results. Still, as we go further in the reflection we will grow the first insight with new perspectives brought forth from the second insight, these will both grow from the new perspectives of the third insight, which all-together will expand through the forth insight. All the insights can be seen, hence could be addressed, in every episode of destabilization or whole design engagement but this is an aspect we will be further developing in the next part.

To conclude, theorizing through an accumulation of different images and sides of indiscipline, our notion of indiscipline is itself a “living theory” which aims to construct more nuanced and thorough understanding of how and why social design is possible through and as indiscipline.



3.1

It's about the how

**3.1.1 The ERC Project in Bairro da
Cova da Moura: a journey through pictures**

**3.1.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline: the
appearance and disappearance of
the wall-newspaper**

3.1.3 It's about the how



3.1.1 The ERC Project in Bairro da Cova da Moura: a journey through pictures

“Exploring the contributions of Relational Space for promoting the Right to the City: experimental research in Cova da Moura, Amadora, Greater Lisbon”⁶³ (ERC) was an experimental research project between April 2013 and April 2014 aimed to rehearse horizontal forms of public space intervention, through the reflective and practical potentials of “relational space” and the notion of the “Right to the City” articulated by Henry Lefebvre (2012[1968]) and more recent approaches by David Harvey (2008). Focusing on a concrete case where struggles for urban recognition and efforts to improve living conditions are still ongoing, the ERC project engaged fieldwork in the neighbourhood Alto da Cova da Moura located in the city of Amadora, Greater Lisbon.

Cova da Moura is a self-built settlement, that emerged around the 1960s when a small number of people began to occupy a privately-owned farm called Quinta do Outeiro.⁶⁴ During the Carnation Revolution, in 1974, an extensive migration movement from the newly independent former Portuguese colonies in Africa, such as Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and St. Tome and Prince, led to a rapid increase in population in the area and a growing number of informal settlements throughout Greater Lisbon.

Cova da Moura was home to a great number of people who were employed in construction so the houses and buildings in the neighbourhood were durable and afforded basic conditions for dwellers. Over the years, the neighbourhood resisted and survived ongoing threats and actions of partial and massive eviction. Emerging as one of the major self-produce neighbourhoods that still exist in Portugal, Cova da Moura is one of the largest territories (16,5 hectares) to accommodate a lively social and cultural exchange between Africa and Europe, through few generations of people that have already been born, created roots and thrived inside, outside and beyond the neighbourhood, reaching about 6000 inhabitants. Still, economic vulnerability and political exclusion, produced out of the State’s land regulatory

63 Funded by national funds through FCT-Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, EXPL/ATP-EUR/1772/2012, coordinated by anthropologist Júlia Carolino (FAUL/CIAUD/GESTUAL). The ERC project team: Júlia Carolino (coord.), Joana Lages Lages (workshops’ coord.), Joana Braga, Inês Veiga, Sofia Borges, Arménio Brito dos Santos, Ana Valente. Consultants: Isabel Raposo (FAUL/CIAUD/GESTUAL), Danny Wildemeersch (KU Leuven), Eric Hirsch (Brunel University of London). Monitoring and evaluation: Ana Valente. Graphic design: Inês Veiga. Video documentation (movie): Sofia Borges, Walter Fortes, Celso Lopes. Partners: Associação de Moradores do Bairro do Alto da Cova da Moura, Associação de Solidariedade Social do Alto da Cova da Moura, Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude. Co-design the public space proposal with: Madalena Pereira, Catarina Mauricio, Diana Barbosa, Patrícia Monteiro, Salvador Lobo.

64 *Alto* which means “high” or “high-up” relates to the hill where the settlement was located between the farming facilities and next to a “quarry” or “pit”, Cova. One of the first families to inhabit the place was presumably named *Moura*.

Figure 1 (p. 104) The 2nd Workshop.

Figure 2 Aerial pictures of Greater Lisbon and the neighbourhood Alto da Cova da Moura in the Municipality of Amadora.



framework (Carolino and Lages, 2012, p. 4), persist and are sustained through the mainstream media, which raises “continued conflicts in the commune and in Portuguese society at large about the question ‘who has the right to the city: the landlords, the property owners, the occupants, the authorities, the local associations?’ And, to what extent and in what proportion?” (Wildemeersch, 2014, p.1).

Self-produced neighbourhoods of illegal genesis have been subject to different kinds of approaches in Portugal. Along the last 50 years, these have ranged from complete eviction, of so called “bairros de barracas” perceived as shanty towns, to the legal recognition and subsequent integration into the city plan and municipal management (Lages et al., 2017). However, top-down actions are elusive, long and bureaucratic shifting according to elected councils, social, economic and political developments and power balances in the government and regional institutions (Wildemeersch, 2014, p.1; Lages et al., 2017). It has been too often the case that citizens wait decades for concrete decisions and interventions, while precarious socio-spatial conditions or lack of access to city services and infrastructures aggravate. Usually paralleled with a discourse of violence, linked to forms of racism, and conformed poverty and precariousness, also through the channels of mainstream media, the visually and visibly apparent degradation of social confidence and spatial conditions becomes a way to justify high orders of destruction or further inaction. Therefore trapped in between plans or modes of being,⁶⁵ some places such as Cova da Moura develop tactics to continuously improve living conditions autonomously, as well as, to continually reclaim the Right to the City.

The research group GESTUAL⁶⁶ has been active in the neighbourhood collaborating with the three main local associations for almost 12 years. The “Associação de Moradores do Bairro do Alto da Cova da Moura” was the first organization in Cova da Moura founded in 1978 by a group of residents concerned with resolving the urban and land regulation issues. The “Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude” (ACMJ) founded in 1984 by a group of residents who were engaged in the struggles to improve the living conditions in the neighbourhood.

65 “In between plans” is an expression used by one of the researchers, Joana Pestana Lages (2017) to describe a socio-spatial condition when neighbourhoods, such as Cova da Moura, find themselves stuck “in transition” or “in liminality” between the City’s current urban plan, which defines the settlement as an occupation of land, and the programmatic visions of the City as the “future plan” which varies accordingly to the council in power. These prospective plans, either maintain the illegal status or struggle in the present — usually with no concrete results in time — to account for their circumstance, hence existence in the city as a formal site.

66 GESTUAL - Group of Socio-Territorial, Urban and Local Action Studies, founded in 1997, aggregates a group of senior and junior researchers, teachers, students and professionals in Urban Planning, Architecture, Anthropology and Design. It is department of CIAUD - the Research Centre in Architecture, Urbanism and Design, and based in FAUL - Faculty of Architecture of the University of Lisbon. See: <http://gestual.fa.ulisboa.pt/en>



Setting off with the successful installation of clean water access and sanitation in the neighbourhood, throughout the years ACMJ has developed community work within the scope of employment empowerment, gender equality, child and senior protection and care, protection and promotion of multicultural traditions, which turned the association into a non-profit organization. And the “Associação de Solidariedade Social do Alto da Cova da Moura” (ASSACM), a former sports’ club founded in 1980 which is nowadays a non-profit organization in the social solidarity sector and works as a community centre mostly dedicated to child and senior protection and care. While providing important insights for the interpretation of Municipal city plans and proposals for the area, over the years GESTUAL has supported each organization individually and mainly the union in organising synergetic initiatives for neighbourhood management and local spatial renewal.

One shared interest among the union of organizations and independent citizens in Cova da Moura, recently, had been to attain housing and public space degradation through micro, yet, conspicuous interventions in the neighbourhood. The aim was to issue an explicit response to the City Council’s inaction towards ongoing solicitations to further a decision about possible legal recognition. In attempts to make justice to ongoing socio-spatial struggles and movements of local resistance, GESTUAL researchers began to devise a framework to explore the gap between such concrete struggles and the abstract notions of the “right to the city”, understood as the right to change ourselves by changing the city (Lefebvre, 2012[1968]; Harvey, 2008, p.23). In time, the ERC project was drawn coming out as a research project proposal to rehearse horizontal alternatives to the formal urban planning interventions.

Originally, the proposal was drawn by two researchers of GESTUAL, one anthropologist and one architect, who engaged the local union to discuss the possibilities of becoming partners of a research project aimed at making concrete public space interventions in Cova da Moura. One primary aim of the ERC project became to act beyond the scope of the academia agenda towards responding to real challenges in regards to the spatial quality of life in the neighbourhood.

In 2012, these researchers staged a small activity in the neighbourhood to discuss with citizens the existing and potential uses of a square (the *Largo*). In the very densely built environment of Cova da Moura, this public space, later called Largo de Sta. Filomena, was mainly used for parking cars but always referred to, by residents and the associations, as the largest space where interventions could be possible in the overall absence of formal green, play or resting public places inside the neighbourhood.

Grounding practice on a relational approach to the co-production of people, places and the city, the researchers framed a participatory action-research practice constituted through a local laboratory dynamic. The main purpose of the

Figure 6 (top) Participatory workshop in Cova da Moura in 2012

© GESTUAL (Joana Lages, Júlia Carolino)

Figure 7 (bottom) Public meeting in April 6, 2013 between residents, the union of organizations, actors of “Iniciativa Bairros Críticos”

and GESTUAL © GESTUAL

laboratory was to record possible ways of action which prefigured concrete urban intervention processes and proposals particular to the neighbourhood and how the people conceived, articulated and appropriated space in daily life (Carolino and Lages, 2012). Therefore, the laboratory followed two interweaving tracks. One consisting in an ethnographic engagement to uncover stories of life, habits and traditions in the neighbourhood that extended throughout the duration of the project. Another, which articulated a series of formal participatory events or workshops more precisely focused on the unfolding of situated matters of care and experimentation of possible design re-articulations. Both tracks were to be monitored and documented in order to facilitate exchange, furthermore, supporting the workshops' dynamic, a wall-newspaper emerged as a useful and low-cost interface capable of communicating the formal calendar dates and inviting people to join the process across the neighbourhood. Around this time, composing a multidisciplinary team, three more researchers from GESTUAL, two architects and one graphic designer, joined the ERC project along with a visual artist, who entered as an independent collaborator.

Interweaving the ongoing GESTUAL's engagement with the union of organisations, the first activity organized within the scope of the ERC project was a public meeting, held in April 6, 2013, to review the more pressing issues of Cova da Moura and the emergent perspectives in regards to the latest initiative in the neighbourhood about social and spatial quality of life. More specially, a governmental initiative launched in 2005 called "Bairros Críticos/IBC"⁶⁷ that was suspended in 2012 facing the challenges of the State's law in land and urban ownership recognition.

During the meeting, the organisations were committed to demonstrate how it is possible to improve living conditions in the neighbourhood by respecting the existing self-built infrastructure and the everyday practices, moreover, by involving people in the process. During discussion, some residents also argued:

"We need to start making small interventions in the neighbourhood, from quarter to quarter, so that it continues to evolve. This is what for us, residents, and many don't say anything... But this is what we want to know: what are we going to do, from now on? Ok, we cannot do large scale changes, but we can make those smaller ones... so we need to start gathering people."

67 "Iniciativa Bairros Críticos", translated as "Critical Neighbourhoods' Initiative" was a ministerial resolution, approved by the government, to experiment in three critical territories in three different cities: Cova da Moura (Amadora), Lagarteiro (Porto) and Vale da Amoreira (Moita), a bottom-up approach to address specific critical social and spatial issues based on establishing local partnerships while building a network of private and public institutions. ("Iniciativa Bairros Críticos" — Law: Resolução do Conselho de Ministros nº 143/2005, de 2 de Agosto publicada no DR, I Série - B, de 7 de Setembro de 2005)

Coming out of the meeting with new insights to constitute a more formal participatory process where a concrete public deliberation process and public space improvement could be rehearsed and experienced, the Largo emerged as a valid opportunity to build on work done. While the ethnographic engagement maintained the entire neighbourhood as a site for engagement and reflection, the series of workshops focused the scope on the challenges and opportunities of a situated intervention and micro improvement. In this view, “This Square could be like this” (“Este Largo Podia Ser Assim”) became the name for the workshops centred on designing a collective process with people for exploring possibilities of transforming the Largo.

Meanwhile, the team agreed to design a visual identity of the project. It made sense as a form of recognising the ERC project in the neighbourhood since the practice would take many forms through diverse people, participants and means, as time passed by and activities unfolded. Approached as an instrument or tool to give overall coherence, the graphic designer was responsible for designing a proposal.

Approaching design as an autonomous process, the visual identity for the project was conceived through the drawing mixture of abstract architectural representations with concrete shapes and textures collected from the neighbourhood. The aim was to generate a visual language and communication tone that identified the project while also addressed people in familiar ways. Henceforth, a symbol was drawn from the letter “C” as an outlined cubic structure, which could function independently but also become filled with colours, textures and pictures from the neighbourhood. Composed with a single sans-serif geometric typeface and selection palette of strong colours (black, red, blue, green, yellow) these became the basic foundational elements to, as openly plastic as possible, be used and transformed according to the emerging unexpected formats and contexts of communication within the scope of the project.

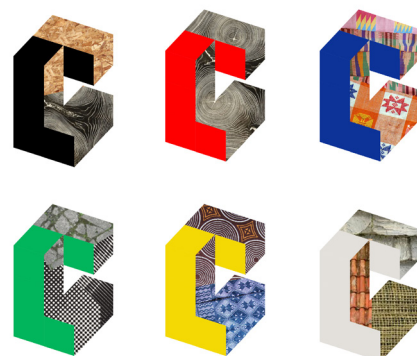
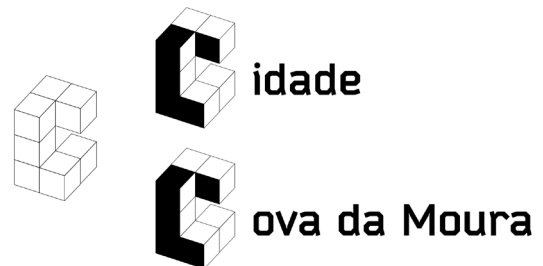
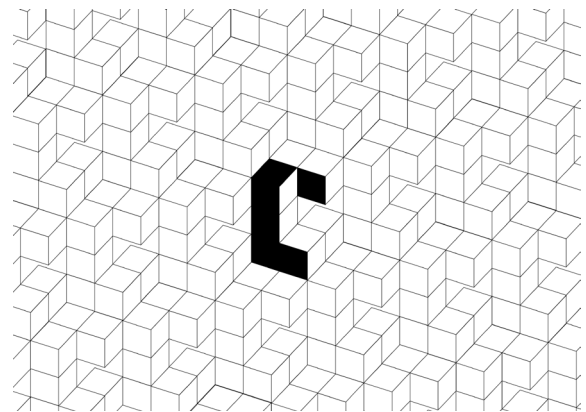


Figure 8 Designing the visual identity of the ERC project: study drawings for the symbol. The final logotype. Testing the “C’s” filled with textures © Design: Inês Veiga

ESTE LARGO PODIA SER ASSIM

#1

Em 2012 foi assim

Depois da actividade realizada em junho de 2012, que juntou alguns moradores no Largo ao pé da Rua de Sta. Filomena, surgiram novas ideias e propostas de renovação e qualificação deste Largo. Este ano, propomos experimentar com os moradores do bairro da Cova da Moura algumas dessas ideias!

Nos próximos meses de junho, julho e setembro vão realizar-se um conjunto de Oficinas experimentais no Largo e toda a informação será disponibilizada através deste jornal. Esteja atento aos próximos números e participe nas actividades anunciadas!



"deixar as crianças brincar"



"este espaço faz"



"sentar à sombra"



"jogar às cartas"

"os mais velhos querem sossego"



CONVITE

**Dia 14 de Junho,
venha descobrir
outros largos!**

A abertura oficial das Oficinas "Este Largo podia ser assim" será no dia 14 de junho com uma projecção de imagens inspiradoras e exemplos de "outros largos" do mundo. Venha até ao Largo ao pé da Rua de Sta. Filomena conhecer a equipa do projecto e juntar-se à festa!

As Oficinas "Este Largo podia ser assim" são realizadas no âmbito do projecto:

ESPAÇO RELACIONAL E CONVITE À CIDADANIA

Projecto financiado pelo FCT

Projecto financiado pelo FCT

Projecto financiado pelo FCT

Projecto financiado pelo FCT

Projecto financiado pelo FCT

Right after branding the ERC project, the first wall-newspaper was designed. Emerging in reference to other micro participatory processes, each edition of the wall-newspaper was meant to report on preceding events and simultaneously announce upcoming ones. Approached as a tool for the researchers to make public the process of the ERC project, designing and editing was a graphic designer's responsibility while in close collaboration with the team contents and visual messages were reviewed and validated. Intended to announce the first workshop in the Largo, recalling the activity that had took place in 2012, the first edition of the wall-newspaper presented an opportunity for the researchers. To present the project as well as the team to the people in Cova da Moura, turning posting the wall-newspapers into a public event. Arriving in Cova da Moura in one afternoon with a list of places (coffee shops, restaurants and local stores), white glue, brushes and a bucket, that became the first participatory activity of the ERC project.

In each place, we took all the necessary time to engage in conversations with the people about the neighbourhood, the Largo and the ERC project. In a cafe, for instance, through the wall-newspaper we presented ourselves while explaining what was happening to the owners and costumers present. At some point in conversations, the question if the owners would be willing to accept a wall-newspaper emerged, then whether it could be post inside or outside the establishment.

Regardless of the response, our plan was to stay until all conversations had ended, so the time it took to post, or not to post, varied in terms of length according to how the particular social engagements developed. When accepted, it were the owners who decided on the appropriate place where to glue and place a wall-newspaper. Despite the destabilisation of everyday life, more visible in some places than others, posting always ended with a wall-newspaper on a wall.

The morning after posting the wall-newspapers, the researchers receive a phone call. One of the team members, who lived in the neighbourhood, was calling to report that every wall-newspaper had disappear from almost every wall, remaining only two to three left, precisely in the cafes where we already knew the owners. After an engaging afternoon, wherein full of enthusiasm an invitation to participate in the project had been issued to the people, who also openly received us and the wall-newspapers, that was surprising event. Emerging at such an early in the process, when the formal workshops had not yet started, the researchers decided to carry on with activities, and for the next editions of the wall-newspaper, to not perform any posting event, instead reduce the number of wall-newspapers and delivered mainly to the local associations still posting few in the electrical poles in the Largo.

Figure 9 "This Square could be like this" wall-newspaper © GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Design: Inês Veiga)





Figure 10 The event of posting the wall-newspapers ©
GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Sofia Borges, Joana Lages)



The first workshop, “Mostra Outros Largos” (‘Other Squares’) was an event to exhibit and discuss public spaces and public space interventions in other squares around the world. It happened on a week day, setting off as an afternoon installation which later turned into a night projection. In the middle of the Largo, a tent made up of an umbrella covered with colourful fabrics was built on site, and inside there was a computer screening a slideshow of architectonic and artistic public space installations in diverse contexts.

Aiming to trigger in the people the imagination of new possible uses and different materialities in the Largo, the proposal was to reflect on “what to make”, “what to design” and “what to build” deriving inspiration from those other possibilities of living the public space. “And you? What ideas do you have for this Largo?” this was the question handed over to the people who came to participate and see the slideshow. From the beginning of our presence in the Largo, children were the ones who spontaneously engaged with the researchers to ask about the happening and helped to build the tent finding rocks to secure the fabrics from the wind.

Later on, some of their parents calling for dinner were taking the opportunity to ask about the happening. Still they did not stay for long, nor engage in long conversations, nor entered the tent, and eventually we were alone in the Largo. For quite some time, there was no one appearing in the Largo, nor even cars parking. Later in the afternoon, we began to move the slideshow outside the tent, mounting a projector on top of one of our cars. We had permission from the owner of the house to make the projection on his façade, that was when some dwellers began to approach the installation.

Building everything on site moreover doing smaller activities, such as wrapping the tent with pictures from the slideshow, also with children, were meant to convey a sense of festivity to the workshop and support the mutual discovery between the researchers and the people.

More or less after dinner, that was when few members of one of the local organizations ACMJ began to appear, as well as few people from the houses nearby the Largo. The tent at that point turned into a supporting place to gather stuff and make pop-corn, while the people and the researchers were outside discussing ideas but most of all reasons for transforming and not transforming the Largo.

The “Mostra Outros Largos” did not engage so many dwellers as we had expected. Moreover, the conversations that took place focused mainly on questions of why, rather than what could be the public space intervention. Therefore, planning the next workshop event we decided to propose a public debate to make more transparent the reasons to transform and the reasons not to transform the Largo.

The materials of all the workshop’ events were made by all the researchers, dividing all the tasks to produce the event before arrival. Following more or less the visual guidelines of the ERC project’s identity, the idea was that everything

Figure 11 “Mostra”: building the tent on site © GESTUAL (Ana Valente)



Figure 12 (this page) "Mostra": the computer screen inside the tent. Some slides from the slideshow which read from top to bottom: (first column:) "ideas for Largo de Sta. Filomena", "what to design", "what to build", "living this new Largo", (second column:) "what to make", sitting in the Largo", (third: column:) "green: more plants in the Largo", "And you? What ideas do you have for the Largo?"

Figure 13 (next page) "Mostra": for quite some time nobody appeared in the Largo, nor cars passed or parked. Later in the afternoon we move the slideshow outside projecting on the house façade. Some dwellers begin to appear in the Largo and we start making popcorn. © GESTUAL (Joana Lages, Ana Valente, Ana Valente)





was to be built or put together on site to harness the potentials of staging to trigger encounters with people and making things together.

A couple of weeks later, on a Saturday afternoon, a cubic structure made with wooden studs and a series of coloured plastic was built in the middle of the Largo, to create a room for exhibiting and writing claims as well as for starting conversations around a small mock-up of the Largo.

While the workshop focused on the reasons and utility of intervention, amplifying the attributes of the Largo as a capacious space for the co-existence of several things at the same time, was aimed to trigger again new ideas and new ways of living the Largo.

Next to the Cube, there was a table kids' club where children could 'redesign their own Largo' using a buffet of materials and a clear plan view representation of the Largo. Once again, children were the ones who appeared first and engaged spontaneously in activities.

While children were engaged in making giant slides and swimming pools using modelling clay, building their own new Largo's, it was only after some time that some adults come to approach the installation and the dialogues around the mock-up began.

The conversations flickered between 'what is the Largo' and 'what the Largo could be', through the materials which demonstrated parking cars need not be an exclusive doing, since there was plenty room for other things: benches, tree beds, possible different kinds of lighting or shade structures, etc.

As more people gathered, an opposition began to emerge. Those who favoured transformation immediately began to brainstorm ideas proposing playgrounds for children, plating furniture, table and chairs for seniors to play games. One resident even proposed a stage for concerts and plays, inspired by an event that had happen in 2012 wherein an orchestra came to give a concert in the neighbourhood, right in this very Largo. Those who did not want any other uses claimed a fundamental need to park cars. Inside the neighbourhood, the streets are often too narrow so there is not much free space. There was also the point that there was already a big garden close by, outside the neighbourhood, where most seniors were going and the nannies were already taking the children to play. On the way to this garden, next to the neighbourhood, however, there is a formal car park which is usually empty, so the argument of the people who were against transformation unfolded towards the fact that those who live in the Largo are seniors, thus a particular concern was about the possibilities of attracting noisy and unfamiliar people to cause disturbance and make trash.

Inside the installation there was a table-map where the people were invited to pinpoint where they lived in the neighbourhood, in order to better understand whether those who were engaging in conversations about the Largo lived close by or far from the place.

Figure 14 The 2nd workshop: building the cube in the middle of the Largo.
© GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Joana Lages)









Figure 15 (p. 124) The 2nd workshop: stripes with the claims; below the kids' club and the micro mock-ups of new Largos with giant slides and swimming pools using modelling clay. © GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Joana Lages, Inês Veiga)
 Figure 16 (p. 125) The 2nd workshop: discussion around the small mock-up inside the cube. One resident remembers the orchestra in the neighborhood and proposes to make a pavilion in the Largo. Conversations about the concern for possible disturbance and more trash in the Largo. © GESTUAL (Ana Valente)

Figure 17 The 2nd workshop: table-map to pin-point where people lived in the neighbourhood. The Kola San Jon group and its *tamboreiros* approach the site. The workshop ends with the stencils to mark a parking space in the Largo with a floor-game. © GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Inês Veiga)



The ACMJ organization was once again the only local organization whose members were present throughout the event. Approaching the end of the afternoon, they had invited one of their activities, the Kola San Jon group and its *tamboreiros*⁶⁸ to perform at the workshop to support in conveying a sense of celebration and call attention of more people to the event.

In previous meetings, it had already emerged in conversations among the team the idea of combining parking spaces with games marked on the floor, therefore, as a symbol of the possibilities of plural co-existence of disparate uses of the Largo, for the end of the workshop, the researchers thought of marking one parking space in the Largo with the game twister inside. Leaving a trace behind this activity marked the end of the workshop event.

In parallel to the workshop events, the ethnographic track continued. At this point, after the second workshop, internal conflicts among the team members began to manifest. The anthropologist opposed to way the workshops took transformation for granted, without paying attention to what the people were actually saying concerning their current ways of living. Engaged in the everyday practices of the people around the neighbourhood, she had listened to complains about the ERC project and questions about the authority of unexpected strangers to intervene in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, in the backstage, as the coordinator of the project, she had been receiving hostile emails from one of the residents nearby the Largo, who was an active politician, to call the activities off because himself and a group of other dwellers had already other plans for the Largo, and we, as outsiders, had no legitimacy in proposing and doing anything in the neighbourhood.

Nevertheless, scrutinizing the project in several encounters, that also involved the consultants of the project, the researchers agreed that with the point that the workshops made room for the expression of the other side, that of those who wanted the transformation of the Largo towards a place that, beyond matters of power, invited people to do different activities beyond parking cars.

So, the opposition to the ERC project was more complex than a matter of simply calling activities off. The Largo, the people and the debate that were emerging, they were becoming explicit with and within the workshops not in spite of them. From the rationale of a relational space, therefore, the relational process could and should not stop. From the perspective of the remaining researchers, the project and the workshops were about public issues. So far, having raised and being part of a public debate where conflicts were an achievement and a sign of an unfolding democratic practice it would have been unethical and irresponsible to resume the project at that point. The decision to terminate the actions was not

68 *Tamboreiros* are drum players who are part of the traditional *Kola San Jon* celebration parade in Cova da Moura which occurs every year in July to celebrate Saint John and derives from a traditional celebration in Cape Verde.

Figure 18 (top) In 2012, July 25th, the "Festival Grande Orquestra de Verão" produced by the famous Portuguese maestro António Vitorino d'Almeida brought the "Orquestra do Norte" to perform in Bairro da Cova da Moura and the event took place in the Largo © GESTUAL (Ana Valente)

Figure 19 (bottom) Observation of the Largo in July 2013: photograph series of how many cars park in the square. © GESTUAL (Arménio Brito dos Santos)

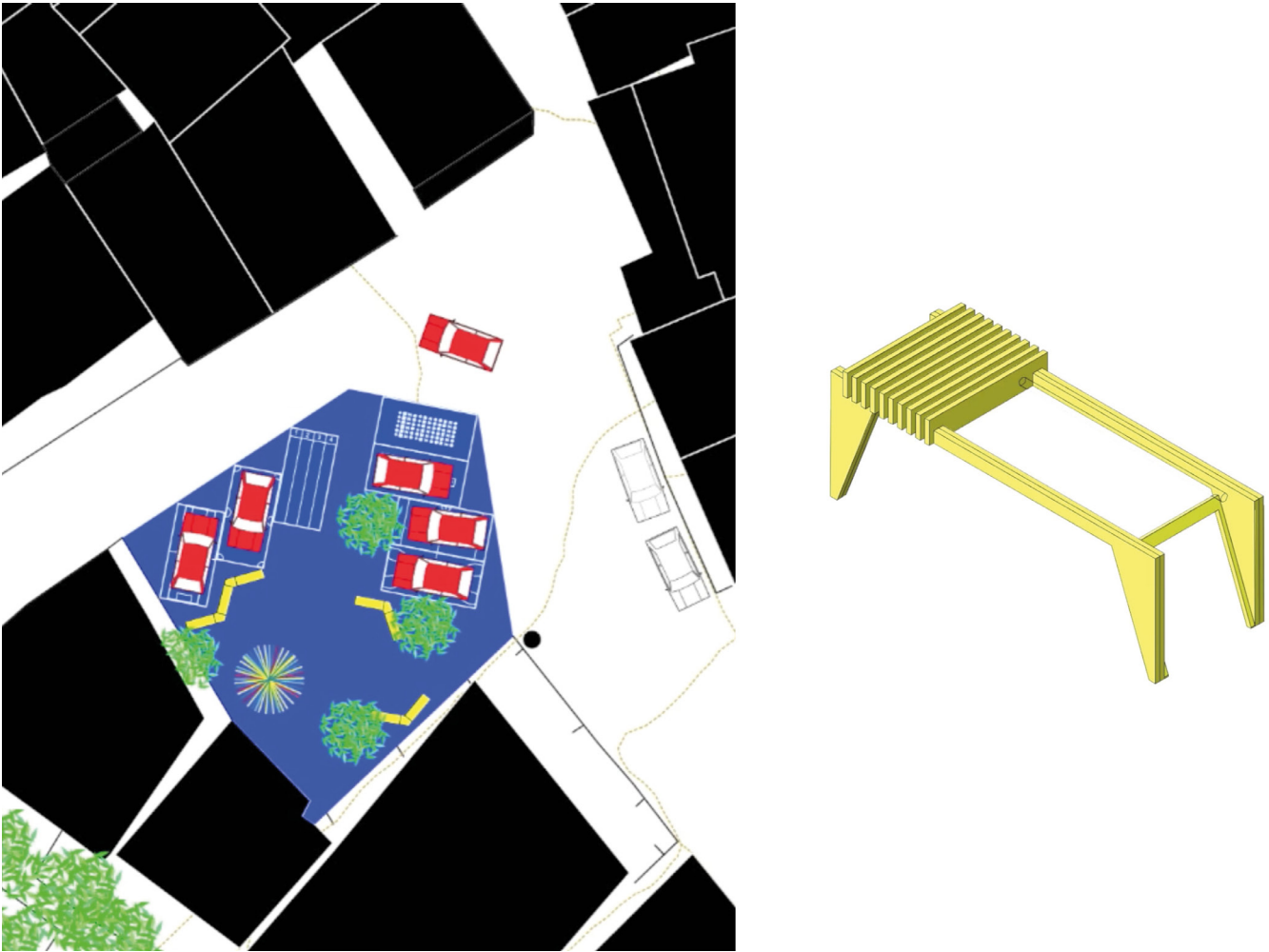
for a single participant to decide alone. The decision had to be shared, hence relational. Considering the continuity of the workshops, still, the anthropologist argued these required changes in the approach and in the doings, in order to keep the debate alive and avoid convergence or compromise. After the 2nd workshop, it did not seem logical to do a remake of the same event and discuss reasons to transform and not to transform again. Therefore, for the next encounter in the Largo the proposal of the architects, designer and artist, was to bring a mock-up of an actual intervention that negotiated both sides — how to maintain parking space along with playing possibilities, resting places, green furniture, etc. This was the point when the team slip up. The anthropologist refused to take part in the conception, reflection or production of the workshop activities, engaging only the ethnographic track, which from the beginning had been a sole activity from which the other researchers had been already removed. Following the step to explore concrete proposals, and bring one or several to the next encounter with the people in the Largo, the workshops' team decided to make an open call to architecture students to join the team in co-designing.

After the call, six architecture students joined, and along several meetings we co-designed one proposal with all the components ready and accounted for possible implementation. The proposal consisted in renovating the floor with a coloured material, organizing the parking spaces with different games also marked on the floor for the children, a large table with benches and a structure that provided shade, and some plant furniture blocs which were movable and could be reorganized in the space.

Preparing the proposal with all the components implied that some design decisions had to be made in advance, especially in regard to the budget, material options, and construction methods, affecting formal and functional properties of the proposal. The idea became so to keep options as open as possible relying on funding of the project to start up implementation, if that would become the case, and then applying for other funding sources to finish.

Meanwhile, the ethnographic track continued, and the anthropologist together with the team member who lived in the neighbourhood had decided to take pictures of the Largo every day for one month to record how many cars circulated and parked in the Largo. They also began to engage with the owners and costumers in the cafe next to the Largo, mainly men who always witnessed the workshops from afar without ever engaging directly.

These two promising activities, however, had little impact on co-designing the proposal or rethinking the next encounters in the Largo. The first which could have helped make visible the links between parking and everyday practices in the Largo and the neighbourhood, did not went further beyond a question of how many cars can the Largo accommodate, which was a calculation the architects



had already made and made public during the 2nd workshop. The latter evolved to the collection of few stories of life and permission to use the café to build a mock-up of the entire neighbourhood, which was part of another student's master project in GESTUAL. This project was coordinated by one of the consultants of the ERC project, yet it had nothing to do with the ERC project, nor it was interested in collaborating with it, still, the coordinator of the ERC project became part of it in parallel. So, the ethnographic track, as it appeared for the rest of the team of researchers, was diverging from the ERC project towards things beyond the Largo, although, regardless of the workshops, the whole process and the work already done, nevertheless, with the people.

Co-designing the proposal together with the students, moreover, preparing all the components and outputs to communicate and present it to the people in the Largo, was taking too long. At some point, in order to not loose rhythm, the workshops' team decided to organize a third workshop event.

The third workshop was an event dedicated solely to the children aimed to explore in concrete which floor games the kids preferred to play in the neighbourhood, especially those of the kinder gardens located next to the Largo who could possibly

Figure 20 The public space intervention proposal: frames from the video animation © GESTUAL (Design: Joana Lages)







choose the Largo over the garden outside the neighbourhood as a place to gather and play. Making the arrangements with the children educators, the anthropologist joined the workshops' team in producing and performing the event, and in one morning we welcomed three groups of children to rehearse play and games in the Largo.

The games included the twister, mini basketball, the hopscotch, and a small game with plates. The educators brought the children's drawings, which had to be hanged by them in the fence, in order to include something of the children in the activity. The children were divided into groups to play one game at the time and then switch to the next. Once everyone had played all the games and hanged their drawings on the fence, we finished with a group picture.

It was a week day, so the usual cargo vans were passing through and stopping at the Largo, as well as some people on foot. Meanwhile the men in the cafe remained observing the activity.

The children educators, meanwhile the activity was ongoing, were asking questions about the ERC project. Most of them do not live in the neighbourhood, so they did not know that the possible transformation of the Largo was under debate, before the invitation to participate in this workshop. That was an issue that interested them, because there already been some negotiations with the local council towards expanding the space of the kinder garden and occupying some space of the Largo had been raised as a possibility.

The project was approaching the end, so the workshop to discuss the proposal would be our final engagement within the scope of a research experiment. The motto was to discuss a 'what if' scenario based on the combination of a parking lot with a place to gather and play for children and senior people. More precisely, the public space intervention consisted in the organization of the space of the Largo in a way that afforded people to park cars, but also play in the pavement, sit and talk at the table holding a structure that provided shade and could also serve as a balcony. The plant furniture was movable and afforded a conveyed a sense of nature, moreover painting the pavement using a specific material would marked a different space within the Largo. The proposal was designed following three main principles: cheap to implement, easy to make and fast to build. None of the components implied drilling into the ground, instead they required a minimum effort to produce, and rather than cement or concrete, the materials were resistant, durable and cheap.

Making formal invitations to the three local organizations and all the services next to the Largo, the café, and the kinder gardens, the children educators from "São Gerardo" proposed the researchers to host the event inside the kinder garden. The prospects of the possible transformation of the Largo towards accommodating children was a matter of care for them, even if they still used the Largo to park

Figure 21 (pp. 132-134) Rehearsing play and games with children in the Largo. While children play, take group pictures and clip drawings to the fence, some van passes through the Largo and men witness the event in the near café. © GESTUAL (Joana Lages, Ana Valente, Inês Veiga, Moo Laforce)



their cars. Accepting the invitation to happen indoors, instead of occupying the space of the Largo, we organized the last workshop to become a more formal encounter with the people, still open and public, although based on the model of the round tables, instead of a more spontaneous gathering. These decisions were also drawn from the ethnographic engagement which reported evidences of an escalate of arguments among the dwellers.

On a Sunday afternoon, the members of the three local organizations attended the workshop event, along with the residents of the houses next to the Largo and other family and friends who lived in different parts of the neighbourhood.

The event began with a video presentation of the proposal and a follow-up discussion triggered by having each participant to fill in “like”, “don’t like”, “have questions” or “want to know more” post-its and glue them on a main board. Then, the researchers picked up each post-it to read aloud and responded to clarify any details about materials, construction and budget while keeping the debate of transformation going.

Raised in some post-its,⁶⁹ was the topic about the number of cars in the Largo. For some participants to accommodate 5 to 7 cars, with all the components in place, was too little. The researchers replied that if organizing the parking lot was to become the chosen public space intervention, then without the table, the shading structure and the plant furniture, it would be possible to provide space for 10 cars. Reporting on the observation done in July of the number of cars in the Largo which counted between 5 to 10 cars, the response of a children educator was that in the summer there were always less cars in the Largo. Other people added that lately they had been counting 7, although, there had been times when there were 12 to 14 cars parked in the Largo.

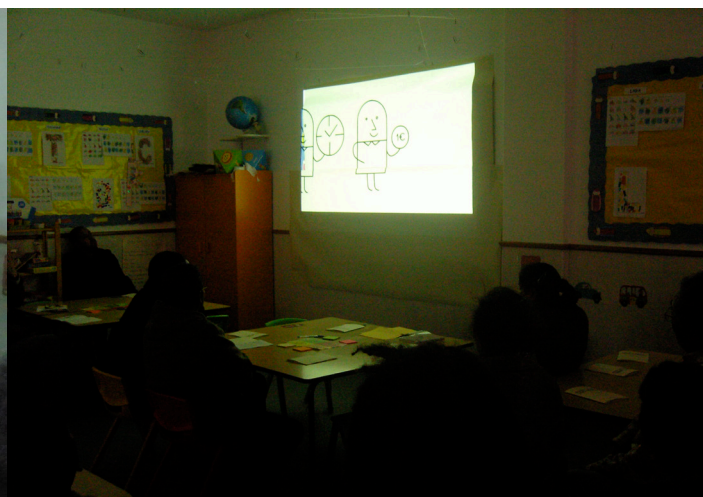
Another important post-it was questioning the co-existence of children and cars. For a member of ACMJ, games are a positive thing because they help to keep away the more troublesome behaviours. Although, one children educator immediately asked if it had occurred to the researchers, the possibility of children damaging the cars because they want to keep playing when a car arrives? Other people commented that children already play in the Largo and sometimes they ask car drivers not to park. Some drivers do go park somewhere else, while others don’t, but that is something they negotiate together.

Another post-it was about the role of the State authorities and municipality in the intervention. An immediate response from a member of ACMJ was:

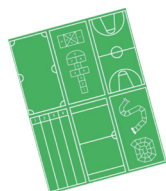
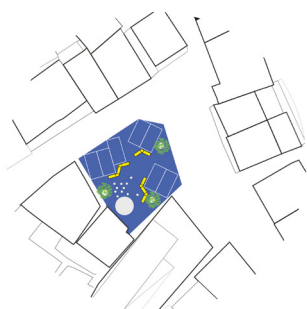
“Who is the council here? It’s us! We pay for everything, so we decide. It depends on us, and what we want to make or not to.”⁷⁰

69 See appendix B: The ERC Project case file.

70 The comments and replies in this account are free translations from the Portuguese



IDEIA 



A MINHA
OPINIÃO

1ª PARTE – NUVEM DE POST-ITS



Gosto



Não gosto



Perguntas

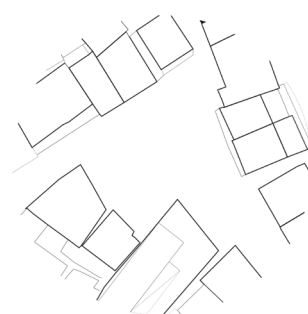


Saber Mais

> Sobre a ideia apresentada, escreva nos Post-Its coloridos a sua opinião sobre gosto, não gosto, perguntas e saber mais.
> O tempo será controlado pela equipa de coordenação.
> No final, cole os seus Post-its no Placard respectivo e passaremos para o debate.

PROPOSTAS

2ª PARTE – TRABALHAR NA MAQUETE





After the discussion, a coffee break occurred in the patio, where the mock-up was tactically positioned. In this moment, debates about intervention sparked into being while interactions with the mock-up were redesigning the position of the elements in space to accommodate more cars and understand the potentials and limitations of the space.

The second part of the workshop was about discussing the proposal using the mock-up and the booklet which had been distributed to all participants which included a blank representation of the Largo so that the people could draw. The conversations that had started during the coffee break extended throughout the afternoon. At some point, one participant stood up and began to take the lead on the debate. He was the resident who had signed the hostile emails to the researchers suggesting to call off activities, although had never showed up for a workshop event before.

transcript made during the session. See Appendix B.

Figure 23 The final workshop: inside one classroom the workshop began with presenting the video animation. Pages from the booklet distributed to participants which included a page explaining the post-it discussion and a blank representation of the Largo to draw (Design: Inês Veiga). The post-it discussion. The coffee break where debates continued through the mock-up. © GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Inês Veiga)



We came to know at that day he was enrolling to become a candidate and run for the local council (Junta de Freguesia), and throughout the event he had remained quiet, until he intervened:

J.H. — Excellent work. You are doing something which is usually not done by those who come to the neighbourhood, which is to listen to the people. There are lots of cars here, not only of the people who live in the neighbourhood. [...] We need to cater for the social. Many people who are here today do not spend the night in the neighbourhood.

I'm glad we are talking about parking! This space is useful for parking. The demolition of the house was unfair, although it became functional. It serves the residents, those who work here, moreover those who live in the surrounding areas. This space must be optimised in terms of parking. Studying the traffic.

Participants agreed with J.H. that parking was something good to keep, although some argued that the shelter was also a good idea. One children educator claimed that "There is space in the adjacent streets to park the cars, in fact is a parking lot just outside the neighbourhood, down this road, which was usually empty." To this, J.H. argued immediately that any comfort in the Largo potentially brought along threatening and unfamiliar people, waste garbage, noise and dangerous behaviours to seniors, who were the majority living in the Largo. There had been some robberies already, he reported. Yet, other participants argued that precisely through the presence of more children playing in the Largo these unwanted behaviours would deviate and people who become more alter to them. J.H. and the coordinator of the ERC project both agree that it is not possible to control such things, and J.H. added that:

"I'm not a supporter of having everything inside the neighbourhood, I want to see people go out. I want my daughter to get along with everyone else inside and outside the neighborhood. ..."

The discussion continued over the same issues and oppositions, until intervention became a yes or no question. One children educator claimed "we need to decide if the Largo is for parking only or if the use can be shared." A member of ACMJ replied: "I think it's a pity. The children and the people are the priorities in this neighbourhood." As all participants agreed to disagree, reaching the highest pick of conflicts, a final remark by J.H. was:

"You need to know the people, the owners of the cars, there is still work to do... People who come or are just passing for a matter of minutes naturally they look and 'that is nice, it might be this way, that is fantastic' ... But the everyday, the reality is another thing."

After the last workshop, nothing different happened in the Largo.

Figure 24 The final workshop: the second part of the workshop to discuss the mock-up inside the classroom. In the end participants agree to disagree. © GESTUAL (Ana Valente, Inês Veiga)



The project ended with a final seminar at the Faculty of Architecture with the researchers, the consultants of the project, the local organization ACMJ who participated throughout the project, and other members of GESTUAL. It consisted in presenting the different perspectives of the project: the ethnographic track, the workshops' track, the organization as a participant, and their particular views of the process and its achievements.

Figure 25 (top) During the ERC project, the square or Largo was named after the street of "Sta. Filomena" "Largo de Sta. Filomena" by the people and the researchers. The name is still used today. © GESTUAL (Inês Veiga)

Figure 26 (bottom) The final seminar and micro exhibition at the School of Architecture, University of Lisbon, with the ERC project team, consultants, other members of GESTUAL and the presence of ACMJ © GESTUAL (Inês Veiga)

3.1.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline: the appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspaper

3.1.2.1 What happened?

Understanding participation in design as democratic practices that don't settle, rather unfold and sustain conflicts,⁷¹ retrospective reflections concluded the materialisation of a process founded on dissensus (Lages et al., 2017).

The uncertainties to take action and who has the legitimacy for it in a neighbourhood that remains, after more than forty years, a 'no-space', were experienced by all participants as an individual and collective inability to make decisions, claim ownership and responsibility for any intervention with more immediate micro and macro social and political consequences. Still, from an agonistic politics perspective, the project framed 'another space' wherein different individual concerns, interests and rationales, often concealed in everyday life, were made public (Lages et al., 2017). For the researchers, sustaining frictions and disputes did not yield impossible to design. The experience made clear that it was from conflicts between participants that different worlds and agendas became visible, hence represented and given a voice (Lages et al., 2017). Even if the process did not result in tangible design outcomes, the attempts to better understand and connect with the community, how they live, use, make space and claim the right to the city, through design actions and materials, enabled a real exploration of alternatives whereby the everyday and the Largo was temporarily transformed (Lages et al., 2017). In the end, resembling the status of the neighbourhood itself, the ERC project remained in the gap, or interval, between the possibilities and impossibilities of becoming a concrete thing. Firmly situated in this liminal space from within which continuity and possible transformations may or may not occur, the future of the Largo, the project and the neighbourhood is after all still open⁷² (Lages et al., 2017).

From a design perspective, the experimental research engaged a complex social and political matter wherein participation of stakeholders was a conscious and deliberate effort on the part of the researchers. Drawing from Manzini, the team of researchers attempted the role to trigger and support an open-ended co-design

71 One of main references in the ERC project for reflecting in action was Rosalyn Deutsche (1999) who argues: "Leaving aside the question of the necessity for, and desirability of, these procedures, note that to take for granted that they are democratic is to presume that the task of democracy is to settle, rather than sustain, conflict."

72 See Lages, Wildemeersch, Carolino, Braga and Veiga (2017). Sobre o dissenso. Considerando o laboratório 'Este Largo Podia ser Assim', no Bairro do Cova do Moura.

process, using their expert knowledge to conceive and enhance a clear-cut focused design initiative (Manzini, 2015, p. 54). The ERC project was a “design research activity” that in the view of a more just and sustainable society aimed to become a sociotechnical experiment and a social learning experience (Manzini, 2015, p. 54). Thus, as an example of a reversal of priorities, the ERC project experimented with participatory forms of spatial and visual designing, risking adversarial, hybrid and generative sorts of social engagement (Huybretches et al., 2015).

As the project unfolds, however, having a social *ethos* does not necessarily imply a particularly sensitive encounter with the community. The designing process articulates a “feedback loop dynamic” between participants (Fischer-Lichte, 2008), although, the decisions about what matters and what is at stake are for the most part controlled by the researchers. Having a social agenda makes a difference only in the sense that the people are given a voice to express their concerns and interests about the matters at stake. Material installations in the Largo deliberately change the environment and the uses of the Largo temporarily, still, participation occurs as a consultation after design. There is no actual co-design if the people provide ideas and knowledge acting as informants, while experiencing the consequences of things already made and formulated, not precisely by or with them, in this view appearing as objects not precisely subjects of action. Understandably, the people were not immediately inclined to engage with the doings of the researchers throughout the project. The difficulty, as it became revealed in the last workshop, was not about what the researchers were doing *per se*. In other words, the problem was not that what appeared in the Largo was so distinctly different or alien to the everyday that it caused a radical estrangement and consequent rejection. Rather the question was about who controls the means of transformation, and, first things first, who decided intervention in the Largo was even an issue, just like the anthropologist had manifested. Taking intervention for granted, the researchers followed the rationale of what is conventionally recognized as a participatory design process and not *the process* (of being then and there) that was actually unfolding. Articulating a tension between the spatial and experiential parts of design precisely, the researchers’ presumption was that being socially engaged was to perform a mediating function. Design was something to be “placed in the middle,”⁷³ to interpose between a group of people and what they aspire, hence, designers were the bridge that would translate those aspirations into concrete things and make them happen. But the people talk back, in Fischer-Lichte’s sense. Beyond conflicts and frictions their responses raise fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of participation. When are ‘we’ precisely taking part in designing, since ‘we’ perform as informants not exactly co-designers,

73 The Dictionary’s definition of the verb “to mediate” from Latin origin of the word *mediatus*, past participle of the verb *mediare*, from Latin *medius* ‘middle’.

furthermore, since every moment in the Largo, hence the happening of design as a *live* event, immediately collapses the perception of a separate “project time” and “use time” (Huybretches et al., 2015)? Being together with the people framed no clear distinctions between design and life. Actions were simultaneously within and without specific agendas or states of affairs as there were no autonomous disciplines nor independent states of being for any participant. So, the experience was demonstrating that the question of co-design was not about when to participate or not to participate and who controls the participation process, but how participation happens and is articulated by all participants, given the ways it appears to be an always and already happening event, moreover, a shared activity. Looking closer to what happened to the wall-newspaper in the beginning of the project, we can make sense of this argument in more concrete terms. More than questions of why, focusing on the manners of how the wall-newspaper appeared and disappeared in the neighbourhood, the entire episode amplifies not the designed product as such a thing but how important, hence present, it became within the everyday of the neighbourhood to a point where it can be said to be alive (Kohn, 2013; Fischer-Lichte, 2008). As we will see, “contingency” is something that cannot be contained or controlled from Fischer-Lichte’s (2008) “aesthetics of the performative”, but what happens to the wall-newspaper is no accident when there is a whole hidden design story overlooked by the researchers. What happened with or through the wall-newspaper that made people care enough to do something? Why did the researchers not continue the dialogue in another direction since the wall-newspaper affected people in such shocking way? As we will see, the problem was not the wall-newspaper, or the gesture of ripping up, or ‘what’ precisely participants do. IT’S ABOUT THE HOW. It’s about in relation to what and to whom these unexpected bodies, things and gestures emerge. It’s about the ways and manners of co-responding or interacting between the two groups of participants in a design situation, which in the ERC project mainly prevented the other an equal position as co-subject, and instead reinforced abstract hierarchies and dichotomies: outsider *versus* insider, subject *versus* object, expert *versus* non-expert. It’s about the incongruity of whistling a democratic participatory practice, when the process was not engaging participants in collaboration or in accepting differences in a productive way (as in dissensus), rather, augmenting the boundaries and distance between them (forcing each other to compromise, as a consensus).

3.1.2.2 The appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspaper

ACT I

The wall-newspaper was a product designed through the classical design approach whereby something is produced with intent and the specific users or future recipients in mind. The motivation to design the wall-newspaper was to make public the ERC project to the people of Cova da Moura so what inaugurates the design event is a process of conception set in motion by the designer that unfolds in the absence of the people of Cova da Moura, although in the promise that once the wall-newspaper is accomplished it will meet its users and serve its purpose to communicate well with them.

Understanding “[m]edia are not summed up by the issue of “representation”. They are part of a tangible expression as well as part of a process of communication” (Gentes, 2017, p. 233). Still, set within a participatory horizon, the wall-newspaper generated a “virtual distantiating” (Gentes, 2017, p. 233). As all artificial objects, according to Gentes, it would virtually set a distance between the two groups of participants especially due to its form-act as a poster which produces reception, hence may also lead participation to become, a matter of passive consumption of things already conceived. Aware of the possible contradictions, since social engagement and co-design was the kind of practice the researchers were after, posting the wall-newspapers emerged as a potential event to demount technical determinism. Meeting people in Cova da Moura and speaking directly to them about the ERC project was another process of mediation that could emphasise communication, hence the definition of things as fundamentally debatable, by handing over the wall-newspapers as markers of the beginning of a partnership (Gentes, 2017, p. 234).

ACT II

Posting the wall-newspapers happened as an interruption of daily rhythms and everyday practices. Set in another tempo and intensity than everyday life, the activity was bounded by the appearance and disappearance of the researchers. A series of “time pockets” to engage in conversation, have coffee, debate issues, and glue one poster on the wall with people, the doings of the researchers absorbed all the attention for its duration. In each event, their role as (expert) anthropologists, architects, designers or artists became temporarily suspended. Even the wall-newspapers became invalidated as a communicative design object, when the happening matched its contents and function. Yet a sense of continuity was evoked through the wall-newspaper that was left behind at each place.

To be clear, the activity was marked by a “rhythm” in which different rhythmic systems collided and another spatiality emerged (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The rhythms of everyday life were interrupted by unexpected persons, gestures and actions. Although, these others tuned (or interacted) with the local behaviours in ways that mutual transformations still accomplished its forms. In other words, the process that fundamentally annulled the utility of the wall-newspaper was precisely what afforded its acceptance and posting everywhere on the list. Whenever a wall-newspaper was accepted and posting was accomplished, it can be argued that the mediality of design based on spatial co-presence of the two groups of participants did converge seemingly opposed rhythms into an evolving communicative feedback loop (Fischer-Lichte, 2008).

The researchers communicate with the people of Cova da Moura in such a way that social interaction opens up a shared design and communication space. In the tensions and compositions between the neighbourhood and the fleeting and transitory nature of the gestures and actions of the researchers, posting acquired the quality of an ‘social design’ event (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.119). The actions of the researchers were no longer representational of conventional or recognisable (design) behaviours or agendas, and this made all the others became the protagonists of what was happening. Invoking the role of the people of Cova da Moura as pivotal in the encounter, in becoming responsible for a wall-newspaper, in helping or in giving consent, the event positioned the researchers and the people as co-creators of the activity, as well as, probably in the matters of the neighbourhood. Assuming that afternoon followed a clearly comprehensible and predictable logic of action for the researchers, still, for people of Cova da Moura it moved them into a state of crisis (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 67). Observing the situation, we can speculate that the people of Cova da Moura may have recognised acquaintances, neighbours, friends or even family also involved, — remember one of the researchers lived in the neighbourhood — observing, interacting, included, excluded, in close proximity or at a distance, with a group of mainly strangers and its doings. To receive a wall-newspaper, to be heard talking about interventions in the Largo, or to be seen near the group might have appeared as if what we were all doing was of concern or interest to the neighbourhood. The situation exuded an atmosphere which concatenated every person and thing already present or appearing in the scene (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). And as more people gather around these subjects, objects, gestures and actions — even if manifesting apparent signs of discomfort conveyed by facial expressions — the more everyone appeared involved. The unknown nature of the activity — as how the people saw what we were doing because they did not know beforehand what we were doing — intensified the performative space (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The whole “atmosphere” and “rhythm” of posting was not only the physical experience of a joint process, it might have

generated the impression of a fundamental unity between the researchers and the people of Cova da Moura. In sum, at each place, posting created a situation to which the people “could not react automatically, that is according to a given set of rules” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 48). Furthermore, to observe was no longer to assume a distanced or uninvolved position (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 57) when, without being able to fully understand what was happening, unfolds a constellation of meanings that “become perceptible once articulated physically, or they stimulate physically traceable reactions” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 143). All participants, including those whose attention was captured and remained observing, may have had an “experience of being [at once part and] unable to command processes and events entirely, of instead being determined by them to a degree” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 99). So, that afternoon occurred as an intense experience of “presentness” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 96), demonstrating “that all forms of physical encounter between people stimulate interactions even if their shape is not always plainly evident” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.43).

Through the tensions of establishing a relationship with the people and accomplishing that relation when something was left behind, the feedback loop accomplished exactly what it signified. Posting the wall-newspapers was an event that went beyond the reception of a design product which represented the researchers or the ERC project. When subjects and objects, agency and spectatorship could no longer be clearly defined or distinguished, posting entwined not just metaphorically but in actual fact all participants and their worlds (lives and rhythms) in communication. The appearance of the wall-newspapers was more than a tangible expression of a mediation process, it was the constitutive moment of the appearance of the ERC project in the neighbourhood, because as a ‘bracketed’ design performance, posting functioned already as one of the future co-design workshops set in motion and terminated by the actions of all participants.

ACT III

As we have seen, posting wall-newspapers was one action among several other doings and gestures that happened during that afternoon in Cova da Moura. Enacting an experience that precisely depended upon the bodily co-presence of participants and a condition of “liveness” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 69), posting opened a design space for all participants to consider the uses of the Largo and eventual possibilities of co-producing a public space intervention. When the researchers left the neighbourhood the reality through which such possibilities emerged, through the “mediatized performance” of the wall-newspaper which in principle invalidates the feedback loop (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 68), would also set the end of designing. But presence and availability of the wall-newspaper

visible all around the neighbourhood at different times and places, as a visible trace and identity of that afternoon, meant that the researchers and the ideas they brought forth did not simply vanish.

From the spatial perspective articulated by Gentes, the wall-newspaper in the walls of the neighbourhood was a “visual identity” of the ERC project that could strongly amplify the outsiders who have access to and can control means of invention and production. If beyond itself a representation the wall-newspaper was also a medium it simultaneously condensed a latent power that could be physically sensed. Focusing the attention on its communicative properties, the wall-newspaper was extremely “expansive”. From the lens of the experiential articulated with Fischer-Lichte and Kohn, the appearance of a wall-newspaper inside a caffè or in the facade of a building already received and in use paradoxically continued to generate atmospheric tensions and trigger a wealth of associations of meaning in the places it had been post (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 140). Whenever a wall-newspaper was perceived, the environment⁷⁴ articulated by the medium became a continuation of the atmosphere of posting which made it suddenly and particularly conspicuous (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Busbea, 2015). Hanging on the walls of Cova da Moura, in the absence of the researchers, the wall-newspapers regained their status as instrumental design objects communicating particular ideas from a specific group to another. Yet, beyond instrumentalization, the wall-newspaper was not as a fleeting sign but an actual thing, conspicuous for what it is more immediately and authentically: an “unexpected other” (Haraway, 1992, p. 300). After the event of posting, the presence of the researchers was to be experienced through the wall-newspaper as an (purely visual or aesthetic) appearance similar to the signs of the people appearing in the pictures or mentioned in the texts. Although, having a material “body” guaranteed (spatial, bodily, visual, haptic) proximity and established a physical connection between the researchers and the people of Cova da Moura. This link made “the promise of presence” articulating a space where through the wall-newspapers participants could physically experience communion with one another and the continuation of the feedback loop (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Kohn, 2013). In this sense, the wall-newspapers were literally an extension of the researchers, their own individual intentions and actions, who and which even

74 According to Larry D. Busbea (2015), Marshall McLuhan borrows from architecture a method for describing a more visceral and material experience of the “dematerialised flows of media”, which he termed “environment”. Within the context of this thesis, rather than a focus on the spatial dimension, we are interested in McLuhan’s concept of “environment” outlined by Busbea as it relates to altered conditions of existence that are felt and experienced with a “visceral, yet elusive, spatial dimension” and how it traces an interesting parallel with the notion of “atmospheres” in Fischer-Lichte’s account (2008). In other words, we want to stress here is how the wall-newspaper produces a total psychological, somatic, cultural, technical, and natural atmospheric shift in the places it is posted. Thus, how the medium interacts with the space where/when it occurs and how that interaction forms another space, or environment that in our case is a continuation of the atmosphere generated in the act of posting.

in absence, or perhaps invisibility, remained present in the neighbourhood. To encounter a wall-newspaper in the neighbourhood was to encounter “something inappropriate, unfitting”, experienced as a continued “interference” of the researchers in (transforming) the everyday of the neighbourhood (Haraway, 1992, p. 300). Perceiving this ordinary aspect of how media works in performative terms, however, revealed in a more visceral way the backgrounds of the situation. Who did actually afford posting the wall-newspapers in the first place? And who continues to allow its presence?

The consequence of having a wall-newspaper on the walls is a matter of ‘who’ in reality, besides the researchers, afforded its appearance and continues to not prevent its presence in the here and now. The perception of something very ordinary, became extraordinary when realising that the responsibility and accountability for the situation was shared. Thus, we can speculate, the wall-newspaper did not simply represent the promise of intervention as a possibility, rather intervention was already it. The people of Cova da Moura may have experienced themselves as co-determinate participants of the situation instead of co-determined or disciplined by the researchers (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). Acknowledging a role reversal, the wall-newspapers may have caused the people to experience their own presence as a “*radical presence*” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 165, emphasis by the author). Those who took the wall-newspaper to be significant, or a sign beyond an object, experienced themselves upon a mere glance mindfully *becoming another* (see reading of Kohn, 2013 in part 2). This extraordinary state, in the face of a wall-newspaper, was the moment when the people experienced the wider autopoietic (fundamentally open and unpredictable) properties of the feedback loop that united them with the researchers.⁷⁵

ACT IV

Facing a wall-newspaper enabled the perception of depth when one thought gave rise to the wall-newspapers as something more than traces of the past that came to affect the present (Kohn, 2013, p. 194). Given the ways these correlated or became alive through an ecology of specific presences and absences, we can speculate that the presence of the wall-newspapers in the neighbourhood performed an “importation of the future” (Kohn, 2013, p. 194). Shifting from icons to indices, the wall-newspapers pointed to public space interventions that were not yet conceived

⁷⁵ Quoting Marshall McLuhan: “Before the electric speed and total field, it was not obvious that the medium is the message. The message, it seemed, was the “content,” as people used to ask what a painting was about. Yet they never thought to ask what a melody was about, nor what a house or a dress was about. In such matters, people retained some sense of the whole pattern, of form and function as a unity. ... integral idea” (McLuhan, 2001, p.13)

but were already demonstrated or *predicated*⁷⁶ in their physical appearance and presence in the neighbourhood. Evidently in the face of a wall-newspaper, exploring possible transformations of the Largo was not something to envision or look forward to do in the future workshops. In effect, the event of posting had already opened up the possibility for all participants, humans and nonhumans, to experience a metamorphosis, therefore, it expanded the possibilities for different kinds of public space interventions to emerge. The rhythm and atmosphere of posting actually guaranteed the physical appearance of the wall-newspapers, hence, the physical manifestation of a public space intervention as a “‘thing’ whose ‘thingness’ never vanishes” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 161). Drawing from Kohn, wherever there was a wall-newspaper there was a “call to act in the present” about a “re-presented future” in the here and now (Kohn, 2013, p. 37). Acknowledging extraordinary details within the situation while entering the realm of the possible, in the absence of the researchers, however present through the wall-newspaper, urged a positioning or response. Insofar as seeing a wall-newspaper continued to “erase valid rules and norms and establish a state of radical betwixt and between for all participants” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 176) the people of Cova da Moura entered such a “liminal state” that in the face of indiscipline (Foucault, 1995, p. 290) they respond and issue in something other than the sacred image of the same, something inappropriate, unfitting, and so, maybe, another indiscipline.⁷⁷

3.1.2.3 When or where does design end?

We can never be sure about the meanings articulated in the disappearance of the wall-newspapers. As an “act of materialisation”, in Fischer-Lichte (2008, p. 143) terms, the gesture explicitly aimed to put an end to something. The wall-newspaper? The relationship with the researchers? The ERC project? Intervention? Semiosis? All at once? Beyond the what, the people of Cova da Moura were taking the situation seriously. The unexpected gesture was a violent producer of a boundary between us vs the researchers. But to perceive conflicts within relational, socially engaged, or participatory design processes — moreover, framed as democratic negotiations — in their specific materiality as purely sensual phenomena does that simultaneously imply perceiving them as insignificant?

Considering the event of posting a design event set in motion in the bodily co-presence of the researchers and the people in the neighbourhood, it constituted

⁷⁶ When a sign is indicative of an absent future but acts as the subject or predicate of that potential scenario it emerges as what philosopher Charles Pierce calls a “monstrative index” (Pierce, 1992, p. 173).

⁷⁷ Paraphrasing Haraway, from the original: “issue in something other than the sacred image of the same, something inappropriate, unfitting, and so, maybe, inappropriated.” (Haraway, 1992, p. 300)

another social reality with its own spatiality and temporality. Through social and design interactions, which called upon participants' senses to immediately and authentically decide how things developed, both the people and researchers shared ownership for what happened that afternoon. The event occurred as "the specific turns the autopoietic feedback loop takes" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 50), not only through the gestures of posting *per se*, but as well as through how the event was experienced and represented by participants. The people of Cova da Moura could have had dismiss posting and the wall-newspaper as pointless or irrelevant, had they not experienced everything and everybody become conspicuously different during the event. Posting the wall-newspapers was not perceived by the people as a design workshop, rather they experienced the transformation of the neighbourhood, and of themselves, already occurring as an authentic and real phenomenon. Found between fiction and everyday life (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 177), people engaged in a "crisis" or "liminal situation" that endured beyond that afternoon and was reinforced by the remaining presence of the wall-newspapers in the neighbourhood. To a point capable of bringing about the "catharsis" of an actual transformation (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 191), the destabilisation of the self, the world and its rules, norms and habits stirred people to act towards doing away with the wall-newspaper.

Due to the unexpected and shocking nature of the gesture, however, the researchers decided not to correspond. Carrying on with the masterplan, they appear again in the neighbourhood after some time for the first formal workshop of the ERC project: the "Mostra Outros Largos". Happening as a follow-up of the event of posting, and in the continuity of the disappearance of the wall-newspapers, this first workshop formulated, in turn, the researchers' response.

Like the event of posting, such response emerged as another disruption. By the fact of not attributing any design value to the people's gesture, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers performed exactly what it signified: the wall-newspapers ceased to exist. The decision to continue with the course of the project that produced/represented the other as non-existent, in the continuity of a previous gesture that excluded something because it lies beyond the realm of what is accepted, marked the whole design dynamic from that moment on and until the end of the project.⁷⁸ Seeing the design space as a design event, through the binocular of indiscipline, it means the materiality and meaning are emergent. Whatever appears, disappears

⁷⁸ Drawing from sociologist Boaventura Sousa Santos (2007), casting participants only as instrumental informants, or dismissing design for an improper form of knowledge with no conceivable place in the matters at stake, became a material doing that was experienced physically by all participants. As the author argues: "'the other side of the line' vanishes as reality, becomes nonexistent, and is indeed produced as nonexistent. Non-existent means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as nonexistent is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of what the accepted conception of inclusion considers to be its other." (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 68).

or is generated in the engagement between participants – actors and spectators, designers and the people – marks the situation. It precludes any predetermined intentions, purposes, qualities or interpretations, because its appearance is a “performative generation” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 24). The “self-referential” character of performances as *live* events ensures that each gesture or action, in the feedback loop, is a continuity of reaction or continuity of relation that “simultaneously constitutes a social situation and creates social interaction.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 170)

Emerging as a destabilization of design provoked by everyday life,⁷⁹ the disappearance of the wall-newspapers emerged for all participants as a non-design gesture that represented a refusal to participate in the ERC project, hence the end of designing. Yet, by using the wall-newspapers, the event of their disappearance was not based on a gesture, action or behaviour fashioned independently from the reality that was shared with the researchers. Rather, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers recognises the researchers as co-subjects in the process and in the matters at stake. What if, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers was another turn in the feedback loop, therefore a continuation of the design conversation that was happening, albeit manifested in a different, unpredictable, perhaps even inappropriate, manner? (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 177) If so, the gesture urged the positioning and response of the researchers, who were themselves now in a liminal situation. In this view, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers was an expression of indiscipline rather than the end of designing. If the disappearance of the wall-newspapers was a physical representation of some meaning in relation to the researchers, then, it was profoundly non-trivial. It represented the people’s response to the appearance an “integrative thing” in the timing when they felt to interact as equal co-designers (Gentes, 2017). From the beginning of the design event and throughout its unfolding participants were always responding in reference to the present and to what was happening in the design space (Gentes, 2017). While emotions and ideas generated by perception triggered impulses for action, the self-referentiality of the feedback loop afforded participants a chance to bring forth new meanings constituted with and through the things they all produced, received and shared. In this sense, by denying *our* mediated appearance, the people acknowledged *our* real presence, making *us* participants of *their* everyday while becoming co-designers of *our* project.

79 Referring to the disruption of the discipline of design caused by everyday life when set to intervene within it, we are here drawing from the argument articulated by performance studies scholar Shannon Jackson (2013, p. 29) who attempts to make clear a distinction between treating “life” as the content of artistic work – framed as “the “disruption” of “life” into art” – and practicing other kinds of art which can be interpreted “by the degree to which they provoke reflection on the contingent systems that support the management of life.” In this sense, Jackson argues that the “acts of support” are the most disruptive acts in art, which beyond questioning its autonomy are able to find in others the heteronomous engagement needed to make art as such.

The disappearance of the wall-newspapers was a real consequence and real intervention drawing from the creative possibilities and responsibilities of being inside a designing process engaged with the researchers. Beyond the struggle for control over the tools to accomplish well-defined goals, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers was a design gesture. If designing the visual identity of the ERC project was the constitutive moment of the design performance between the researchers and people of Cova da Moura, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers was an indication that designing was still ongoing. Emerging from within a designing process as an indiscipline it multiplied the number of possibilities for its continuation. Again, if the appearance of the wall-newspapers was the constitutive moment of the feedback loop between participants, the people's response to the researchers materialized, as a reiteration, the *indiscipline* of two previous events — posting and the wall-newspaper — that had been experienced as “shocking” even if the researchers did not represent them as such (Kohn, 2013).

What makes the episode with the wall-newspaper extraordinary is that within that micro performance sameness did not prevail,⁸⁰ rather indiscipline, and to make things differently, emerged as a right and a possibility (Foucault, 1995, p. 290). Although goal-oriented actions were part and constitutive of posting the wall-newspapers, the event did not aim “to transform” anything or anyone “into this or that” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.199 - italics by the author). At such an early stage of the project, it did not depend on “sustained deliberations and convictions that had to be shared by all members of the community.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 55) The event of posting only required two clearly distinct groups to engage in a common activity for its duration. Drawing from Fischer-Lichte (2008, p.199), the journey became the goal. From not knowing about the existence of a project about the Largo, towards knowing about a new group of people, understanding another perspective and redefining positions, the event of posting performed a passage. In the encounter between the researchers and the people, intervention and its respective reasons, ‘how’s’ and ‘what’s’, that had been envisioned by the researchers alone, were made public and emerged fundamentally open and debatable. The disappearance of the wall-newspapers, then, was the recognition of this transition and the confirmation that a relationship had been established and a design space had opened up (Gentes, 2017, p. 218). As a kind of “failing to play along” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.171) it emerged as another attempt in the conversation at negotiating relationships, visions and roles that continued being shared and under negotiation. Therefore, it was “a poetic effort to create new forms of coherence” (Gentes, 2017, p. 236).

80 As Haraway explains: “[t]here is hardly a need for affinity groups and their endless process if sameness prevailed. Affinity is precisely not identity; the sacred image of the same [...] The processing of differences, semiotic action, is about ways of life.” (Haraway, 1992, p. 318)

3.1.3 It's about the how

3.1.3.1 All design is social but not all design is social design

The appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspapers seen as a design event set within a wider design event demonstrates that the feedback loop dynamic between participants unfolded for the entire ERC project in a rhythm of presence and absence. A durational and dialogic process, in which, presences inform absences and vice-versa until the journey achieves its purpose or end, was precisely what the researchers had planned for the unfolding of the ERC project. The participatory workshops were the moments of presence to negotiate and discuss things and ways to project with the people in the neighbourhood. In between these, the absence of the researchers represented to the moments of reflection, making sense of the workshops and preparing the next encounters, moreover, taking the design process further in the production or implementation of things, when and if required. In this framework of action, however, the researchers solely owned the decisions when to be present in the neighbourhood, hence when to interact with the people, when to negotiate and discuss, moreover, which things and matters did matter. In turn, the people of Cova da Moura, before the event of posting, did not know that a project had been formulated nor how it had been planned. So, the workings of the feedback loop as a dynamic of appearance and disappearance, attachment and emancipation respectively, intensified for the people the ongoing experience of a shock or crisis. Every time, the researchers, the installations, or other things (such as the wall-newspaper, which was meant to inform about the presences of the researchers) appeared in the neighbourhood, they appeared as emergent phenomena, as “unexpected others”, therefore, as disruptions (Haraway, 1992). The event of posting, the “Mostra Outros Largos”, the workshop for discussing reasons to transform or not, the workshop with children, etc... Were all in themselves, already, transformations of the space that each time generated another use of the Largo temporarily. All of these encounters followed a logic that only made sense for the researchers and how they conceived of what the designing process was.

Drawing from the binocular of indiscipline, the presence of the researchers and the things they did in Cova da Moura dominated the space and radically pulled the attention of the people in attempts to understand. The absence of the researchers framed the people as receivers on hold or waiting for something to appear, meanwhile the experts were engaged in producing something mainly unexpected for them. In this sense, everything that represented otherness, change, resistance and insistence on the part of the researchers, was experienced as brutal because it alienated people from their familiar habits without being able to fully understand

what was happening. In turn, the behaviours and gestures of people were experienced by the researchers as well as a shock. When during the workshops people deliberately did not take part, sometimes even avoiding to get closer to the installations, or when the wall-newspapers disappeared, the experience was brutal because the researchers did not grasp or represent their own actions as disruptive, only part of ordinary designing. This constant mismatch between how the people represent the researchers and themselves in the design process, and how the researchers represent the people and themselves when set to act in everyday life, turned the feedback loop into one of teasing together instead of apart. The distinction between the world of designing and the world of everyday life was made forcefully explicit in the ways participants interacted. Consciously and not, instead of negotiating matters at stake, participants negotiate differences of identity, undoing each other's actions and purposes. Still, looking closer, the disorders they intend to provoke in the other, *use* the things (for example, the wall-newspapers) all participants share, make common and are designing with. This makes visible that even when participants explicitly don't aim or want to engage in relation with each other, they do open up a design space. Drawing from Foucault, the "minor illegalities" performed by the two groups of participants that destabilized the logics of each other – of everyday life and of the designing process – did not represent the end of design. Rather indiscipline highlights how design permeated the situation and inundated all participants as every action invariably implicated the 'we'.

The nature of design as a social event, from the experiential lens, opens up a "liminal space" that affords "the possibility for all participants to experience a metamorphosis". (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 23) The destabilizations and turns of the situation as either "role reversals", the "creation of communities" or conflicts between the designers and the people are not expressions of a radical separation between participants. Instead these are signs that they enjoy a sort of parity or have entered an intersubjective space, hence, that they are in fact connected and engaged in designing something together (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Kohn, 2013). Regard that the moments when participants feel radically separated from their everyday, from their abilities, from their habits or from their disciplines in the ERC project it happens precisely when they become social. That is, when some under-determination of the situation or confusion about the other, following the spatial lens, causes participants to meet and do things in relation or in self-reference to the feedback loop reinforcing the design space that is shared.

Coming back to the case with the wall-newspapers, this is the reason why the disappearance of the wall-newspapers reveals the people already *inside* design. It shows how indiscipline is precisely not disruption but the fact that disruption is the spatial form of design made mutual with the researchers (see chapter 2.3.1). To

make this clear, once the people perceived the wall-newspapers posted on the walls of Cova da Moura, they responded. Although, recognizing that such disruptive presence was of their own responsibility as well, the response captured the pattern of disruption present in two previous situations that had been already experienced as disruptive – the event of posting and the presence of the wall-newspapers in the neighbourhood. In this sense, already in its intention, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers carried the possibilities of disruption, emerging as an affirmation that design was the situation propagating in its effortless efficacy (Kohn, 2013). In this sense, the moments of friction between participants were, if paid closer attention, moments of mutual recognition and shared responsibility for the unique design process they were producing together and emerging as products (Fischer-Lichte, 2008).

The case with the wall-newspapers as an indiscipline helps us to understand the fact that design was a process that participants established and were engaged together in the ERC project throughout. Still, the dynamic of teasing together instead of apart precisely made visible that engaging design IS ABOUT THE HOW. The disappearance of the wall-newspapers taken not simply as a reaction or mere contextual effect of the event of posting, but instead as something integral to the internal logics and operation of design as a spatial practice, makes so that the decision not to value it as a design action *in relation* demonstrates how the researchers know what they do and why they do what they do, but what they don't know is what *what* they do does.⁸¹ Beyond the immediate character of a violent gesture, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers made visible, from within design, the possibility and right to indiscipline. In other words, the possibility and right to issue not the same, expected, but an unexpected other that simultaneously belongs to the situation and expands it. This is no different than how the wall-newspapers had previously performed alone, when by themselves, they appeared unexpectedly present, in the neighbourhood. If we pay closer attention, the wall-newspaper was another previous indiscipline, which invited participants to openly and in equal terms participate in taking the design process further. To disorder the everyday of the neighbourhood was a possibility and right owned by the researchers, which, not as an offence but as an opening of possibilities that had never appeared or been present before (Foucault, 1995, p. 290) — in other words, the manifestation of something unexpected in the undergoing repetition of the same (Haraway, 1992) — demonstrated that their doings were the people's own possibility and right to make something different for themselves. Regardless of whether the people project or partly realize the boundary between them and the researchers, the indiscipline

81 Paraphrasing Foucault, from the original: "the people know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does" (Foucault apud Dreyfuss and Rabinow, 1982, p.187)

performed reveals an expansive realm of designerly ways of designing, beyond the symbolic and conventional discipline, that do presume a relationship between co-subjects and the possibilities of shared making and mutual manipulation. More than a disruption, the disappearance of the wall-newspaper was an act of design that communicated something needed to be different. The gesture was integral to the process of design for it postulated disorder as a possibility, and indiscipline as a right to say 'no' and negotiate something different from within, or from the inside of the social space of design.

Paying attention to the things we do, how we are doing them, and what what we do does, moreover, caring for what others do and how they do them in relation to us IS ABOUT THE HOW. Driven mainly by what is the intervention (or what to project), the researchers did not grasp HOW their approach was already disruptive, and contradictory by having a democratic ethos while involving others only afterwards of a presupposed problem or need, when things had been already designed and implemented. Moreover, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers was an act of materialization *in relation* to two previous acts of materialisations, therefore, influenced and marked, in material and semiotic terms, by them.⁸² Drawing from the binocular of indiscipline, it may have been the case that the mediatization of the co-design space through the wall-newspaper may have invalidated the feedback loop intensifying the experience of exclusion from decision making for the people of Cova da Moura (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 68).

Nevertheless, the disruption of design made by the people was similar to the disruption of everyday life performed by the researchers when design was set to intervene within it. Therefore, revealing the people as caring participants in the design situation, hence, the disappearance of the wall-newspapers opened the chance for *us* to correspond in changing directions, rethinking roles, hence, continue to further possibilities for passionate negotiations. This does not mean anything that anything goes in design or counts as design, but that designing as a socially engaged practice IS ABOUT THE HOW. The disappearance of the wall-newspapers as an indiscipline pointed that design as a democratic practice grows not from sheer disagreement, rather from processing the differences that matter (Haraway, 1992, p. 318) or the differences that can make a difference (Kohn, 2013, p. 100). Missing the how, was to miss the real process of design. The real social design space that the researchers ironically were after, hence denying the possibility and right to design, that was implied in the people's gestures of indiscipline. To embrace something "inappropriate" that emerged not in despite of but from within a common situation of design between two groups, would be

⁸² We can also speculate, that the ongoing violence through threats of eviction experienced even prior to the project and over the years, may have contributed. Drawing from Fischer-Lichte, "previously acquired meanings [...] articulated physically in the form of intense emotions" may have influenced the relational dynamic with the wall-newspaper (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 153).

to re-appropriate another “critical difference within” (Haraway, 1992). It would be to recognise an action in the continuity and not to confuse it with general acts of violence (Haraway, 1992, p. 300). It would be to ground its meanings and its possibility, as an indiscipline, within the specific social situation of design, focusing the attention on how things were after all fundamentally, and designerly, open and debatable. Therefore, it would be to fundamentally recognize the people as co-subjects, hence, equal co-designers of the design situation. IT’S ABOUT THE HOW is to perceive how participants engage with design. How they approach unfamiliar situations, hence what is quality of the impulses to design or to act in order to adapt to different circumstances. It is about paying attention to how participants approach making things with others and in relation to others, human and nonhuman. It means to be sensitive to that encounter and understand the quality of design actions, as interactions, or gestures *in relation*, which beyond constraints carry potentials of transformation, of indiscipline, hence design potentials. To understand that design is inaugurated and established through how this interactive and confrontational encounter unfolds.

3.1.3.2 Designing through indiscipline

Throughout the ERC project, the feedback loop between two worlds in competition, not precisely engaged in collaboration, or designing through socialization, was precisely a relationship pattern of “power play” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.170). How the researchers respond to the people, and how the people respond to the researchers, was continuously marked by the mutual imposition of certain positions, behaviours, convictions. Still, the quality of this social form of designing revealed the peculiarities of design as a social event or space wherein everybody designs⁸³ and there is no *a priori* or prescribed divisions of roles, between designers and participants, subjects and objects, producers and receivers, experts and non-experts, only experiential or living generations of such.

In this sense, beyond role reversals, the twists and turns of indiscipline were the verification of equality as co-designers that participants enjoyed, although constantly re-claimed. The indiscipline performed by the people, as a disruption, questioned the pattern of design that casts aside users, clients, stakeholders and partners, to the role of having to become involved by designers because they are made external to design. In this perspective, expert designers perform an expert contribution in relation to and support of others’ desires and practices, acting as facilitators, mediators or activists, in a process where others – including nonhumans

⁸³ Here in the sense, articulated by Fischer-Lichte, of a situation that “requires the participation of everyone, yet without any single participant being able to plan, control, or produce it alone.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 50)

– exist on the perimeter of a design act waiting to feel its effects.⁸⁴ Engaged in this kind of social engagement that maintains design as a discipline of experts, the researchers in turn experienced design becoming undisciplined – beyond control and beyond design – by the encounter with people in the neighbourhood. Responding through the tools produced by the researchers, however, the people demonstrated that design does not coincide with the work of the expert. In their struggles to find proper channels of communication and to communicate precisely what they meant, to the researchers, therein was their presumption of being socially engaged to a design situation that was shared with the researchers. In turn, when the researchers responded from the presumption of an individual responsibility, it became visible that there is indeed a difference between the social form of expert designing and designing as a socially engaged practice. Demonstrating that IT'S ABOUT THE HOW, the people showed that if design is about others, for others, inaugurated with others, it's precisely from the start implicated and performed with others. Social design is an event that unfolds and is or should be practiced beyond a matter of how expert designers think about how others think. The appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspapers, as a minor but whole event, marked the emergence of something very ordinary (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 99), although radically fundamental: the experience of designing as a social event. However incomprehensible at the time and in the fullest of its happening, such acknowledgement would have been crucial. The ERC project was not materializing a process of dissensus as a result. Rather, “the specific aestheticity” of the ERC project as an indiscipline itself was always and already the nature of a design event, wherein dissensus, consensus and other political forms of designing were constitutive of design as a social space rather than its contextual effects or results. The design “form”, in Kohn's sense, that sparked into being and propagated as an evolving pattern in the ways the researchers behaved, made them “blind” to the spatial and experiential form of designing as they represented everything unexpected to be outside the scope of design or indeed non-design. In other words, taking the disappearance of the wall-newspaper as something that went wrong in a design process is not the same as to consider it an act that can expand the meaning and materiality of the whole process. The design discipline worked as a disciplining mechanism for the researchers, a constraint on possibilities that always performed and predicted the stability and maintenance of their individual expert patterns and position. Therefore, conflicts over differences arising in design

84 Paraphrasing Shannon Jackson in her argument for socially engaged artistic practices: “The social here does not exist on the perimeter of an aesthetic act, waiting to feel its effects. Nor is the de-autonomizing of the art object a de-aestheticization. Rather, the de-autonomizing of the artistic event is itself an artful gesture, more and less self-consciously creating an intermedial form that subtly challenges the lines that would demarcate where an art object ends and the world begins. It is to make art from, not despite, contingency.” (Jackson, 2013, p. 28)

were confused with struggles for identity rather than struggles to design. The difficulty of becoming socially engaged in practice experienced by the researchers was their own difficulty to maintain the disciplines' boundaries. Unable to grasp design beyond the known 'expert form', the researchers missed the social parts of designing hence the encounter between participants did not manage to establish an ethos of collaboration.⁸⁵ If design is always and already a socialization of constraints and possibilities on what to do and how to them, HOW participants engage together is beyond a struggle of individual identities and political agendas (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.44). Despite all the exclusions and difficulties, design still emerged as a collective social form making visible, through indiscipline, that the critical contribution of each individual, expert and non-expert, human and nonhuman, was to be in relation, or designing relationally (Binder et al., 2015; Kohn, 2013). In this sense, socially engaged design IS ABOUT THE HOW because it regards the social experience as the design space. The HOW implies not the prescribed or pre-established design gestures but the design gestures we make/take in relation, to what is happening and to whom we are doing things with. Missing the HOW, in the end, co-designing alternative spaces in Cova da Moura fell short.

85 According to John Thackara (2005, p.219): "A better innovation approach is to switch attention from science dominated futures to social fictions in which imagined new contexts enrich an otherwise familiar world."

Case Summary

It's about the how

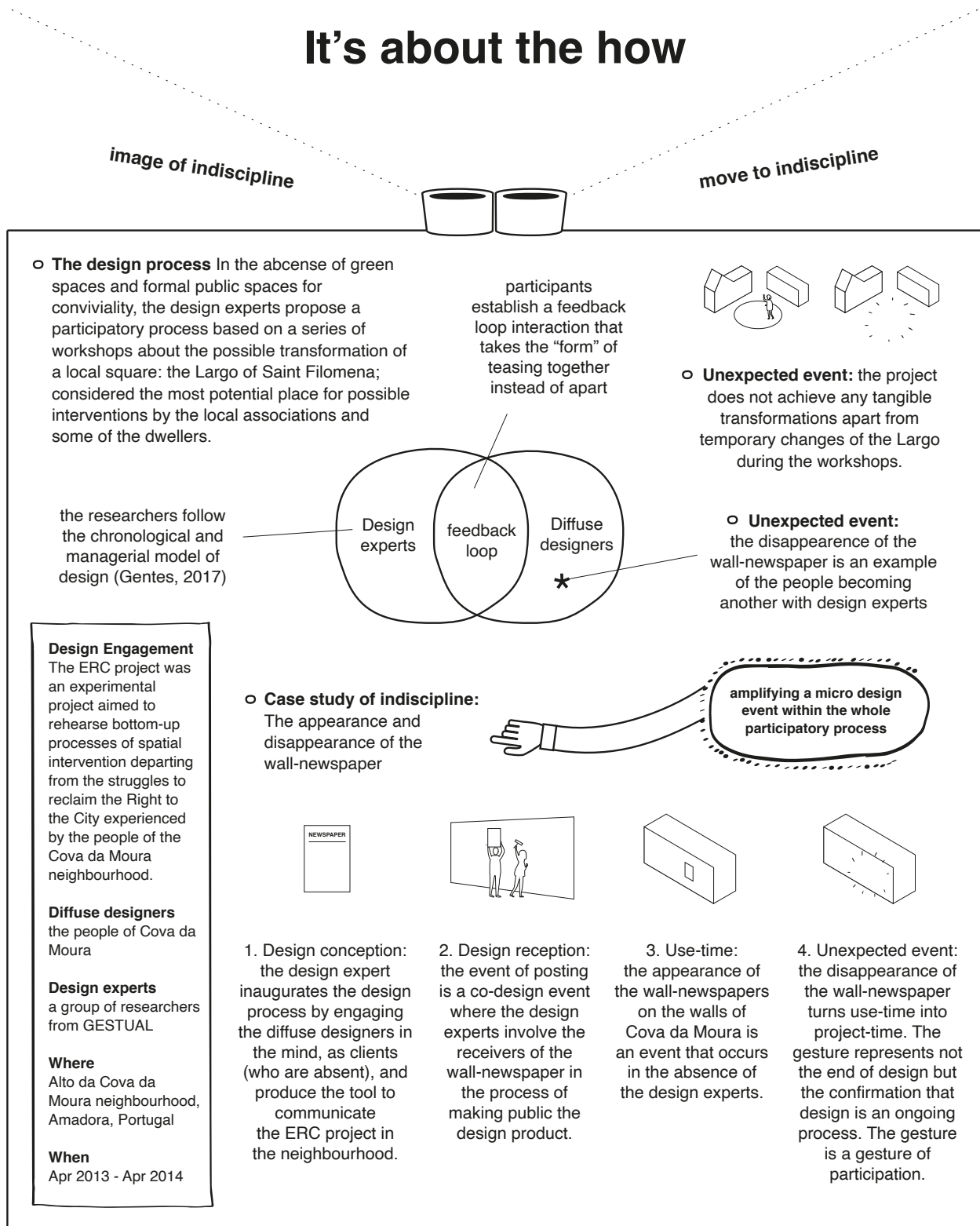


Diagram 8. Case summary through the binocular of indiscipline



3.2

Design is the situation

**3.2.1 The day of the anniversary of ACMJ in
Cova da Moura: a journey through pictures**

**3.2.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline:
human-flags**

3.2.3 Design is the situation

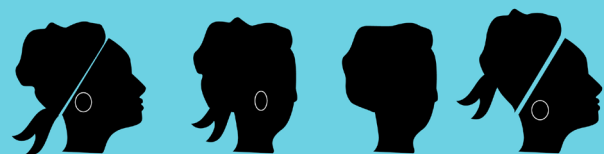


Figure 27 (p. 164) The anniversary of ACMJ.

Figure 28 (top) The ACMJ is an organization founded in 1984 to improve the neighbourhood's quality of life by providing people the conditions to grow well and to access basic needs, services and facilities. In this view, ACMJ organizes its actions according to twelve master principles or guidelines: 1 intercultural; 2 communication; 3 joy; 4 gender; 5 respect convictions; 6 cooperation; 7 empowerment; 8 environment; 9 creativity; 10 persistence; 11 Quality, efficiency and efficacy; 12 being solidary. Together these 12 guidelines intend to foster promote a culture that is mindful of each individual, hence based on respect and solidarity, and the collaboration *in tandem* to generate synergies between and with diverse groups. © ACMJ

3.2.1 The day of the anniversary of ACMJ in Cova da Moura: a journey through pictures

This case is a collaboration with one of the local organisations in Cova da Moura, “Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude” (ACMJ), which, after the ERC project continued to engage with the group of researchers.

Approaching their 30th anniversary on the 1st of November, 2014, and the anniversaries of two main of its main activities: the 25th anniversary of the Batuque group “Finka-Pé” and the 10th anniversary of the programme “Sabura”, ACMJ commissioned the designer to design the poster to communicate the event they were organizing.

To get to know what was being planned and produced for the commemoration, she was invited to join the meetings of ACMJ, who were organizing a two-day celebration. On Friday the 31st of October, the plan was to have an evening solely dedicated to the group “Finka Pé”. The schedule was organized to start with an ethnomusicologist to speak about the meanings and traditions of Batuque, followed by a documentary movie. Later, there would be a Batuque workshop for children and parents, a toast and, to end the evening, a small concert by “Finka Pé”. For the 1st of November, on a Saturday, the plan of ACMJ was to have, in the afternoon, a parade around the neighbourhood. “Finka Pé” together with two other Batuque groups from different neighbourhoods in Greater Lisbon, invited to join the celebration, would stop at different locations and perform a few songs. These stops, filled with music and dance, would be near the restaurants of the “Sabura” network, who would be serving food and drinks during the afternoon along with other activities they could freely organize. The final stop, at the end of the afternoon, would be the ACMJ’s main facilities where, then, twelve anniversary cakes representing the 12 principles and master guidelines of ACMJ would be served.

Understanding that celebration consisted in the overall animation of the neighbourhood, having different activities to cross each other and simultaneously occur at different places, the challenge, visually, was how to communicate this diversity of things, in respect to the three different subjects, in a coherent way.

The agreement was to send, before the next meeting, the proposals for the poster so a decision could be made quickly and ACMJ could start to communicate the event right away.

Figure 29 Batuque is a traditional Cape Verdean music genre and dance, mainly performed by women. “Finka Pé” performing in “Encontros Acarte '91: Dança e Teatro da Europa”, in Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisboa. © ACMJ

Figure 30 “Sabura” is the creole word for “savour” and gives name to a Programme created by ACMJ to promote Cape Verdean traditions in the neighbourhood. The programme consists in the identification of all the restaurants serving traditional Cape Verdean dishes through a sign, with the “sabura” logotype and the specific island where the dishes originate, for instance “Santo Antão” or “Ilha do Fogo”. The sign works as a certification, but also to indicate points of interest to those who are touring the neighbourhood. The tours which are also part of the programme usually take place in one day and include, besides eating, also learning traditional Cape Verdean dances. © ACMJ and GESTUAL

Figure 31 The ACMJ logotype, and the logotype of “Sabura”.

Figure 32 Drawing the symbols, from existing shapes.

The main thing connecting a social organization with music and food was the celebration of the anniversaries. So, the numbers 30, 25 and 10 emerged as a meaningful element. Starting to compose the numbers and adding the names “Moinho”, “Finka Pé” and “Sabura” typeset in Blanch,⁸⁶ we thought to design symbols to represent each subject. Departing from their most recognizable elements, in the case of ACMJ our initial thought was to make a representation of each of its twelve principles. Yet, “Moinho” is the Portuguese word for windmill and a windmill is also the symbol in the organization’s logotype.

Redesigning the windmill, we quickly moved to observe the logotype of Sabura, therefore, drawing an eye in relation to what we thought was smoke coming from hot pan or plate. These two basic but intuitive representations, made it easier to conceive two rapid features of “Finka Pé”, which does not have a logotype. Knowing the group, we thought that the scarf and the *tchabeta*, which is the pillow that women put in the lap between the legs to make the beat, were visually significant elements. Although, to straight forward recognize them, the scarf needed a head, and specifically a women’s head, hence the earring to reinforce the female shape, while the *tchabeta* needed the hands, and then it could become simply a circle.

To ease the reading of all the elements together, the numbers, the words and the shapes, were set in black and on a coloured background. Emerging as a pattern or system of appearance of three different things, which appeared the same way

⁸⁶ Blanch is a typeface family designed by Atipus a Barcelona-based graphic design studio founded in 1998.



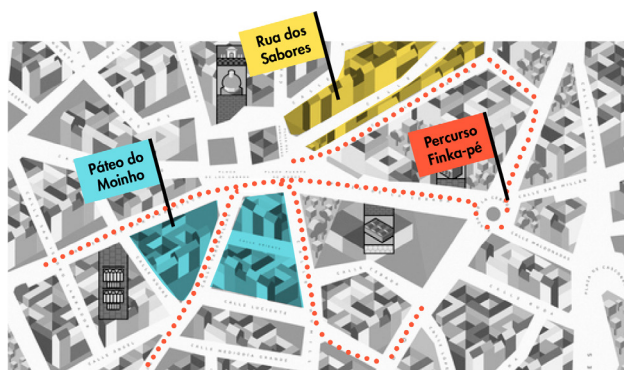


Figure 33 Experimenting with the colours and the elements. In the digital invitation card the elements switch places at each second (see <https://www.facebook.com/moinhodajuventude/videos/709945942427639/>). The final poster for the anniversary event. The leaflet proposal with a map to distinguished different zones and themes of the event was not produced but it was where the idea of flags began to express. © Design: Inês Veiga



although were different, or different were but represented by the same elements, we thought to give it rhythm, like the beat of Batuque, by attributing only one colour to each subject. Meaning, whenever something about “Moinho” was communicated, it was set in a light blue, when it was “Finka Pé” the colour was red, and for “Sabura” was yellow. In designing the poster for the event, however we used a forth colour. The dark blue which is the other colour in ACMJ’s logotype, to become the background of all the general details and information about the event. Designing a single visual proposal, but excited about the results, before sending anything to ACMJ, we began to explore different compositions for a possible digital invitation card were made to be send alongside the poster. These were simple loop animations which functioned by teasers, giving basic information while attempting to convey enthusiasm. Sending the proposal to ACMJ for discussion, that is the poster and different invitation card versions which conveyed a more dynamic sense of different things engaged in a whole of celebration, everything was approved right away.

The commission was over, although ACMJ invited the designer to attend still the next meeting to prepare the day of the anniversaries. Animated by the interplay with the elements and compositions, that portrayed the diversity of things that were being planned, moreover had a visual connection with the wall of tiles where ACMJ has represented its twelve core principles, we thought to propose a leaflet to be hand over during the event. This leaflet would have on the front-side the colourful elements, and on the back-side the schedule and a map to indicate the route and situate the different activities and points of interest of the parade around the neighbourhood.

Highlighting different places and things in the map, such as the patio and the main building of ACMJ, the tour of “Finka Pé” and “Rua dos Sabores” which is one of the main streets where few of the “Sabura” restaurants are located, it came the idea of flags. Marking each activity, moreover, marking the zones or areas where celebration would be happening, flags emerged as another object possible to distribute on the day of the day of the anniversaries. Making a prototype of the flag to see how it would work, we bought chopsticks and printed each flag in coloured paper.

Bringing the leaflet and the flags’ proposal as a complement of the poster and the invitation card, to reach out to more people in the neighbourhood on the day of the anniversaries, during the meeting with ACMJ, chopsticks and some printed paper were assembled with glue to explain the idea of marking zones and activities.

The challenge with the flags was that in order to generate the impression of zones, only by making a large number of them, it would work. While the map and the leaflet did not trigger any response from ACMJ, in regard to the flags they asked to only bring more printed paper, glue and chopsticks.

Figure 34 The flags proposal. Coloured paper with the elements printed for making the flags. The day of the anniversary of ACMJ: flags in the fences and the tour around the neighbourhood with the flags.



After a few days, we brought the printed coloured paper, the glue and the chopsticks to ACMJ, and from that moment every senior group, every child after-school atelier, and every department of the organisation was delegated to make flags until the day of the anniversaries.

On the 1st of November 2014, arriving in the neighbourhood, flags were everywhere covering the streets, hanging on every wall, room, and office, even used as hair clips by women.

Witnessing the many ways by which people embraced the flags and how the flags, although not precisely marking zones but still spread around the neighbourhood marking celebration in ecstasy, was a surprise especially after the wall-newspaper. Few years later, one could still see some of these flags hanging in the walls of some departments.

Figure 35 The day of the anniversary of ACMJ: arriving to a stop where "Finka Pé" and the other Batuque groups were performing.

3.2.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline: human-flags

3.2.2.1 Human-flags

The flags were an artefact designed to represent the anniversaries of ACMJ, Finka Pé and the Sabura initiative. But to anyone who lives or has spent some time in Cova da Moura, it's a habit to see flags, albeit in different forms, either as clues or traces of celebration (See chapter 3.1). Flags are "symbolic" representations or signs based on humanly historical, social, political and cultural convention, and shared references among humans to represent countries, act as emblems, gesture protest or celebration events and other meanings in public gatherings or festivities. In this specific context, flags mediate or function to represent something of the life of Cova da Moura. In the neighbourhood, flags have become symbolic by virtue of the ways instances of flags have been used in local and public festivities. A cumulative and repetitive presence of flags is "iconic" of celebration, because every time they, the sign-vehicle, function *like* the object or idea they represent. Flags share *likeness* with celebration, hence they retain referential stability as a symbol of celebration even if they appear in different forms in Cova da Moura. As inanimate nonhuman artefacts, a flag, however, cannot bring forth its own material presence alone. It does not possess intrinsic meaning or representations, prior to some kind of interaction. Therefore, it's through others that a flag comes to exist, and in that coming together something occurs. It becomes *like that* which it means to represent: a country, a protest, a celebration... (Kohn 2013, p. 31-55)

On the day of the anniversaries, as flags came together with bodies and things, Cova da Moura appeared "enchanted". The flags exploded the boundaries and possibilities of bodies, while bodies interacted, waved, touched and bit flags. The encounter was not a static relation but occurred as humans animate themselves through flags and, in turn, flags become animated by effecting and marking the bodies of humans. Through the binocular of indiscipline, what occurs in this episode is an ongoing flickering between the orders of presence and representation. Perceiving the human presence in one moment and the flag's appearance in another, and what is perceived as the presence of a human-flag in one moment is perceived as the representation of celebration in another. This is what the Fischer-Lichte calls "perceptual multistability" that describes an oscillating focus between '*what is happening*' as what is being portrayed or represented as '*how is it happening*' by what specific actions and participants and how these are brought forth and become present (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 148). The mere gesture of clipping a flag in her hair, Vitalina was "infecting" others to do the same (Fischer-

Lichte, 2008, p. 36). Whether she did not have a good place to hold a flag is not important. What matters is that when Vitalina interacts with a flag, a “difference can make a difference.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 100) Through the “presentness” of the *live* interaction between Vitalina and her flag, celebration was re-presented, informed and propagated from body to thing, thing to place, thing to body, body to place... across the neighbourhood (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Kohn, 2013). The day of anniversaries was a highly contagious event that exceeded things, bodies, sounds, places, words or any material or physical limits.

Looking more specifically through the spatial lens, the day of the anniversaries was remarkable not by an otherness of the flag. Rather, reciprocal touch marks the situation and in motion we see simultaneously humans become *like* flags and flags *like* humans. If there were no humans, then there were no flags. Simultaneously, if there were no flags, there had been no mark that that was not a special day in the neighbourhood. As fences, walls, humans and flags connected, they became different, they became a oneness with or a breaking down of fence-flags, wall-flags and human-flags to celebrate the anniversaries. Space, things, bodies and flags become conjunctively together as “integrative things” that constantly appear and dissolve to unfold as tiny, intimate and ongoing designing processes of mutual “under-determination” (Gentes, 2017). The spatial encounter between seemingly different participants postulates design as “a field of tensions” (Gentes, 2017, p. 169) foregrounding indiscipline as the practice behind the tensions between a diversity of elements to intentionally composed them into coherent wholes. To see all those human-flags, fence-flags and wall-flags in the neighbourhood on the day of the anniversaries, this case is not about flags. The outcome of design is precisely not the flag but a spatial and social relationship that cannot be grasped by conventional design categories or specialist expert representations. A human-flag is not merely *a* human conjoining with *just another* flag. Each form-act is a design event that encapsulates the whole “deconstruction and composition of disciplines” that began ever since flags emerged as an idea (Gentes, 2017). The “circulating energy” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.58) in dancing with a flag, biting a flag, standing beside flags, waving a flag, seeing a flag revealed something more pervasive and ongoing as if human-flags, fence-flags and wall-flags did not form on the day of the anniversaries. But may have been already in exploration and prototypical enactment before the day of the anniversaries.

3.2.2.2 Design infection

Recalling the meeting when flags were mentioned for the first time, we can see how that encounter was already a situation where humans and flags meet. Assembling one flag in the presence of the organisation, did not simply mean

gluing paper to a chopstick, instead, the gesture accomplished precisely what it performed. Through the spatial lens, this tiny event opened up a design space as more hands represented more flags, more humans, hence more human-flags. From that moment, a continuity of reaction generated a chain of subsequent encounters between humans, paper, glue, chopsticks and other things that continued to happen on the day of the anniversaries (Kohn, 2013, p.111). But the designing process was more than an “evolution by addition” of humans to make flags as a line of production (Redström, 2013).

Regard how passing materials, becomes the passing of agency, recognising ability and responsibility in another, hence animating participants to generate flags and celebration *with us* and by themselves. Passing hand to hand, human to human, not the flags as finished objects, but sheets of paper, chopsticks and gestures of assembling, the action is “not *merely* relational (as if relationality were even mere), but, as relational reinaugurates possibilities and potentialities for response” (Schneider and Ruprecht, 2017, p. 116). The de-autonomizing gesture is a design gesture⁸⁷ because it connects a diversity of disparate participants that are next to each other and expands through them to other subjects and objects in effortless efficacy. Who knows when, where and by whom the idea of clipping flags to hair emerged?

Drawing from Gentes, passing along printed paper, glue and chopsticks is a sign of the upcoming day of the anniversaries. The materials offer clues to make sense of the proposal, therefore, “reading” the materials as media or tools to produce the anniversaries, every reception becomes an exploration of semiotic functions: iconic (becoming like flags), indexical (making flags as the manifestation of the anniversaries in the present and in the probable future) and symbolic (exploring habitual and unexpected forms of celebration through and with flags). The materials and the flags are not mimetic representations of the anniversaries, although, paraphrasing Gentes, they articulated “the elements of a judgment on a matter of interest (argumentative requirement)” as well as provided “a body of knowledge intelligible and compatible with the reader’s experience (educational requirement).” (Gentes, 2017, p. 87) Therefore, drawing from Gentes’ notion of “literacy”, beyond “the teleological efficiency of the tool or the emotional impact of the artifact,” there was a common design language unfolding and circulating among participants (Gentes, 2017, p. 83). Then, in the process of generating flags notwithstanding, people also generated other things. Passing the materials to compose a flag is to ground (material and semiotic) design in a predictable social activity wherein humans produce flags but also putting together a flag “shapes the way humans think and communicate about their experience.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 234) Not only production is about becoming familiar with a technology,

87 (Jackson, 2013, p. 28)

but passing and interacting with materials also expanded to others and the way they thought about and received the technology. (Gentes, 2017, p. 234) In other words, paraphrasing Gentes, the design requirements of the situation projected the technique in the users' hands, already incorporating *in the same gesture* the users' lives (Gentes, 2017, p.122). This kind of "socialization of the technology" (Gentes, 2017, p. 122) works similarly to the phenomenon of "infection" described by Fischer-Lichte that occurs in artistic performances.

Not merely interpreted but first and foremost experienced, from the experiential perspective, the gesture of assembling the first flag in front of the diffuse designers' in place constituted a new and singular reality for all participants (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 17). What happened on the day of the anniversaries was the appearance of a design outcome that not only represents but performs the design practice behind it. Humans and flags become together in unison through a process that amounts to the designing process. To note, the story behind a fence-flag is a human who assembles a flag, picks it up and holds it to a fence. That is another form of human-flag interaction, another way of designing celebration, that involves, integrates and transforms another nonhuman. The concept of "form-act" given by Redström (2013, p. 25), can be of help to understand that when participants experience the assembly of the first flag they make room for a new form to emerge: the act of passing materials and gestures of assembling. In other words, we can speculate that the central concern of ACMJ — when they only ask for printed paper and chopsticks —, was not whether the appearance of a flag responded effectively to the challenge of communicating the anniversaries during the festivities. The materials were already good enough as a "form-act" in the ways these might engage and enchant others to make and participate in the anniversaries (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). This episode shows how form is "co-determined by the ways in which it is experienced, by the specific acts of perception involved" (Redström, 2013, p. 23). While symbols, words, colours, paper and chopsticks are passed on hand to hand, do the materials remain the same and only the hands differ? Or is it the act of passing that remains the same, while hands and materials alter over time and space? (Schneider and Ruppert, 2017, p. 111)

This point is crucial because directionality in designing situations can be discernible, but to make it into a pattern of design it "must first be perceived, that is, seen, heard, or sensed — perception plays a crucial role in the autopoietic processes of the feedback loop." (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 59) As it happened in the previous episode with the wall-newspaper, the experience and perception of the event of posting as a violent disruption of the everyday, activated the emergence of certain discernible actions and an overall confrontational relational dynamic pattern for the entire designing situation. Such as Fischer-Lichte argues "[t]he audience's perception influences the performance from the outset and affects all

participants reciprocally, so that energy begins to circulate in the performance space.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 59)

Assembling a first flag and passing materials to the organisation not only shaped and avowed the flag as a form, it gave form and shaped the whole environment in which human-flags emerged, propagated and flourished on the day of the anniversaries (Redström, 2013, p.28; Kohn, 2013). The “form-act” generated in and through the designing process, as the ongoing and expansive assemblage of persons, materials, meanings, relations, purposes, interpretations and sets of acts that were partly intentional, anticipatory, invisible, or even not design related, — for instance, clipping flags to the hair, — became constitutive of how a physical ‘what’ was unfolding as a “discernible pattern” (Redström, 2013, p. 23). As John Thackara puts it, “the keyword here is minds in the plural” (Thackara, 2010, p.95). Functioning in our case as a kind of choreography (Jackson, 2013, p. 28), the “circulating design energy” was integrating and transforming all participants into members of a “form-act” of celebration (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 56). The pivotal point of this case, is not the flag recognized as a design product “detached from and independent of its creator and recipient, which arises as an object from the activities of the creator-subject and is entrusted to the perception and interpretation of the recipient-subject.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 22) Instead, designing is an evolving relationship between humans, paper and chopsticks that expands and grows through infection as an event set in motion and terminated by all participants (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 22). We no longer speak of a design outcome that is external or independent from the encounter between producers and recipients but witness the collapse of these roles and a work of design that emerges dependent on the interaction of the participants. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 36)

Through the binocular of indiscipline, in sum, the human-flags are an extension of the relational process that propagate through and flourished as the sets of design acts, gestures, things, bodies and relations. The design outcome is not precisely a product but a process that involves everyone present in forming celebration rather than only/mainly flags (Gentes, 2017, p. 238; Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 17). The energy that circulates through the materials and the act of passing those materials, grows and intensifies through infecting more hands and more humans to generate an experience that challenges the lines that demarcate where designing ends and the living world begins (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 59; Kohn, 2013, p. 111).

3.2.3. Design is the situation

3.2.3.1 Design is the social situation

The design form and outcome of a designing process that propagates through different ways of becoming together between humans and flags, is, finally, the human-flag. Design is the whole expanded situation found on a relationship between humans and flags that grows in time, space and relationality from imagining, conceiving and producing celebration, that beyond a contextual effect flourishes interestingly integral to the interior operations of its production in continuous contagious ecstasy until the day of the anniversaries (Kohn, 2013, p. 195).

This case of indiscipline is an invitation to consider that whatever notion of the social we may be formulating can only come forth through a critical awareness that design, as both a product and process, becomes constituted through its medium: the social encounter of design that depends on the design lexicon participants frame together. Regarding this case from the perspective that the indiscipline of design IS ABOUT THE HOW, considering that the HOW of design is the HOW of the social event of designing, then, another pattern of design emerged in this case. Beyond a feedback loop, interestingly, designing occurs in this case as an “autopoietic self-organising system” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 50). A phenomenon described by Fischer-Lichte in which performances while being the product of participants’ interactions, simultaneously envelops and escapes them (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 50). Through the lens of the experiential, the subjects and objects of this case “no longer form an opposition but merely mark different states or positions [...] which can occur consecutively or, in some cases, simultaneously.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.172) Relationality is an ongoing event, explicit in the “metamorphosis” between fences, flags and humans, although the intermedial exchanges between them do not compromise or reduce their autonomy, rather their capabilities and singularities become expanded and amplified in the communicative encounter and exchanges. Considering that, while the ERC project’s process was about managing invention (as research) and production (as design) as distinct practices into chronological order, hence following “the project mode of design” according to Gentes, in the case with the flags, the experience was no “cause to consequence” but an ongoing spatial “composition of tensions” (Gentes, 2017, p. 159). The ‘how’ of design and the ‘what’ to design, the existing and the emergent, the process and the product, are one and the same. At its core, design is about meeting or causing to meet and connect socially heterogeneous humans and nonhumans, meanings and materials, wherein from beginning to end human-flags were the epitome and emblematic expression of “projective abduction” (Gentes, 2017,

p. 136). As explained by Gentes, the process of “abduction” that occurs in design as a discipline of “indiscipline” or “semiotic practice that brings to the forefront unforeseen connections out of a diversity of elements” (Gentes, 2017, p. 136), was embodied and embedded within the situation as the mode of how participants engaged, performed and experienced design.

The extraordinary phenomenon that becomes visible seeing the human-flags as design events, is that design is a situation which denotes collaboration rather than persuasion or compromise (Lenskjold, Olander and Halse, 2015, p. 67). The set of materials — paper, glue and chopsticks — allowed for the coexistence of humans and flags, who and which in a rhythm of mutual disruption and coordination become complementary makers of the anniversaries.⁸⁸ The encounter transforms participants in physical and performative ways, while it does not compromise individual existence or autonomy (Binder et al., 2015; Lenskjold, Olander and Halse, 2015). On the contrary, the human-flags live off the diversity of each other, organising a conciliatory yet simultaneously disruptive coexistence, further propagating and expanding each of their individual limits and boundaries. DESIGN IS THE SITUATION, although it is not imposed by anyone or anything alone (Fischer-Lichte, 2008), since no consensual situation of similitude arises from socialization. Instead, socialization enables the contagious propagation of differentiated human-flags which remain integrally different and independent, yet inside interdependently connected. Lifting the ambiguity of whether or not humans and flags are a product or producers of design, considering DESIGN IS THE SITUATION brings forth indiscipline beyond an aesthetics or spatial performance of design, but as the event of designing itself.

As Thackara argues, literally in this case, “design does not take place in the situation, it *is* the situation.” (Thackara, 2005, p.95) The human-flag as an autopoietic self-organizing system of socio-technical collectively shaped configurations can be regarded as a process in which the happening of the social is a design situation. The specific aestheticity of design is indiscipline. The social is not a separate reality that lies outside the contours of design practice. Rather design is a product and producer of a growing ecology of many kinds of participants – ideas, thoughts, to gestures, humans, chopsticks, paper, symbols, actions, fences, flags, hair – that do things in the world they are about, and this is an important part of what makes them and their collective encounter significant (Kohn, 2013, p. 35). Design is precisely the social situation, or the social is precisely the design situation, of

88 Drawing from Michel Callon, in the Afterword of Andrew Feenberg’s critique of technology, who states: “Feenberg believes—and on this point STS scholars cannot help but be convinced by his arguments—that technology allows for the coexistence (and even more than that: the coordination) of different worlds, which it makes compatible (and even more than that: complementary). Technology, or rather technologies as a differentiated set of socio-technical, collectively shaped configurations, can be analyzed as systems of translation in action.” (Callon apud Feenberg, 2010, p. 222)

conception, invention, creative energy, rigor and relevance that gives rise to the human-flag, which not entirely human, nor entirely flag, is a social whole that is more than its individual parts. Beyond similarity and difference, it is an “open whole” (Kohn, 2013, p. 33) which is always a not yet a design outcome, and yet always a design situation.

3.2.3.2 The visual conundrum

In this case, the experience of design is about making and using a designed object. It does not aim at changing a scenario into a preferred one, rather the flags are a design response to the briefing of how to make known the anniversaries to the neighbourhood and a wider public, through visual means. Can we conceive of this episode as an everyday graphic design act? Or is it opening up an argument for something else, captured in how graphic designing, through small but consequential differences, emerged anew?

The visual design form of this episode is without doubt the flag. However, “something very physical, embedded in practice, in how we do things” (Redström, 2013, p. 24), so much so that if we rush to conclude that the design outcome is the flag, we miss all the crucial interactions that reveal how these flags were actually produced by the ones who carry them. More important than the flags, as a static and visual design output, it was the paper, the glue and the chopsticks that enabled the community to make things intelligible for themselves and others. The flags, if we treat them independently, are a visual design thing co-produced and co-opted in ways that demonstrate how graphic design can place itself in co-creation arenas and from that interdependency still emerge as graphic designing. To occur as an autonomous situation set in motion independently from the worlds it is about, design becomes not only a contradiction it appears to not occur as designing. If design is an indiscipline, in this case, it was precisely indiscipline which transformed participants because coming and becoming together between heterogeneous ideas, bodies, things, knowledges and practices is the design act. For Thackara (2005), designing for and with localities is very much about activating what may enact a group and its collective capabilities to meet, share, discuss, learn, make and innovate together. In such situations, he argues, design is about time-based interactions and fostering a free flow of ideas, perspectives, relationships and trust, therefore, expert designers “need to interact in them, not pose in them” (Thackara, 2005, p.99). But the human-flags make clearer another difference. That taking graphic design somewhere else implies indiscipline: the transformation of the forms and formats of visual making and representation, that emerging through the social are not anti-design or non-design. As we hope to have demonstrated with the binocular of indiscipline, graphic design as a discipline is

not lost, rather, it is found in this case within a specific social situation, occurring as a social activity of collectively shaping a visual communication environment.⁸⁹ Departing from the differences between presence and representation, this case does not really show a vulnerable place where a vulnerable community lives, so, what and who are being re-presented through this work? Design is always about something beyond itself, so can we speak of a reechantement of the world? If not, what is the meaning of having an expert designer collaborating with a neighbourhood that persists to be portrayed by the mainstream media as an “illegal”, “violent”, “precarious” and “poor” settlement where “ambiguous” and “dangerous” things happen — even when these scenes happen all over the big cities?⁹⁰ Should graphic design, then, be only about invention as an addition of pre-existing forms and not design form as a difference? When priorities are different, are they not calling into question the very contours of the discipline, challenging traditional notions of graphic visual communication and ways of giving form to that?

In respect to the debate about graphic design as a practice of advertising, a difference that makes a difference in this case is that there is no clear opposition between the presentative and representative character of designing.⁹¹ Both humans and flags underline their own physical appearance as much as they dissolve to refer, signal, represent and describe the other, and together present and represent another everyday. The disruption and deconstruction of the mainstream discourse about the neighbourhood is embedded in practice, not posed by any participant alone (including this text). If graphic design is precisely the practice, the process

89 Rick Poyner describes graphic designers as the “shapers of visual environments” (2012, p. 287). Drawing from this perspective, we can understand both the flags and the human participants as the effective shapers, hence the designers of the visual, in this case.

90 A very strong idea articulated by Judith Butler (2018) is that sometimes we act as if we had to alleviate communities from their vulnerability, when what is actually needed is to release them from the exploitation of that same vulnerability. Free translation from the original in Spanish: “A veces actuamos como si hubiera que aliviar a los niños, adultos o a poblaciones de su vulnerabilidad, cuando lo que hay que hacer es aliviarlos de su explotación. No podemos dejar de ser vulnerables sin dejar de ser humanos, o pensar que porque no nos sentimos vulnerables no vamos a ser explotados, o peor, destruir nuestra capacidad de *relacionalidad* con el fin de protegernos.” Interview available at: <http://revistadeletras.net/judith-butler-la-filosofia-comienza-con-la-desorientacion/> [Accessed in April 28, 2018]

91 This argument about graphic design is articulated in relation to an immediate reaction to the First Things First Manifesto 2000, in the form of another manifesto called “Disrepresentation”, the studio group Experimental JetSet (2001) argued that there was “no structural difference between social, cultural and commercial graphic design. Every cause that is formulated outside of a design context, and superficially imposed on a piece of design, is tendentious, representative, and thus reactionary, whether it deals with corporate interests or social causes.” (Experimental Jetset, 2001) The reason, they articulated, lies in a crucial distinction between the “representative” nature of advertising and the otherwise “presentative” character of graphic design, which makes the latter highlight its physical appearance even if it refers to others. From the original: “per definition, advertising never “is” in itself, it always “is about” something else. Advertising is a phenomenon that constantly dissolves its own physical appearance, in order to describe and represent appearances other than itself. Whereas presentative graphic design seems to underline its own physical appearance.” (Experimental Jetset, 2001)

or that which “forms the connective tissue that holds so many ordinary visual experiences together” (Poynor, 2012, p. 288), instead of assuming a clear division between the autonomous design situation and its heteronomous environment, between presence and representation, visual appearances and ways of appearing, what if the formal challenge of graphic designing lies precisely in the blurring and ambiguity of such divisions?⁹²

If, as we have seen through the binocular of indiscipline, participants are caught in between an aesthetics of presence and of representation, between “having-a-body” and “being-a-body” embodying emotions and meanings physically that affect others internally in such a way that it does not produce distance but “infects” them to *do* the same,⁹³ then, the difference between the two loses its significance. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 149) Drawing from Kohn, co-constituted in interaction, people and flags emerge relationally and the boundaries we normally recognize between humans and objects blur giving rise to a new “soul” (Kohn, 2013, p. 106). In instability, there is “the establishment of a new stability”, which is the real happening in the neighbourhood of a certain fictive world as the particular symbolic order of celebration (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 149). Perception and infection, meanings and their physical effects, were on the day of the anniversaries evidently driven by the desire to produce celebration (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 149). But this same desire, in our view, was foundational to the stability of graphic design as the practice of this episode, because the meaning attached to the flag or to the object’s phenomenal being generated an ensuing chain of associative meanings and performative physical articulations based on “self-referentiality”, which not necessarily related with designing or celebration, still opened a constellation of ways of designing celebration and representing celebration on the day of the anniversaries (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 150; Kohn, 2013).

To conclude, this episode is not about the concrete, static and visual form of the flag. But about the flag as a “form-act” that engages the full activity of a growing web of humans and their total (physical and semiotic) capacity to design celebration

92 Paraphrasing Shannon Jackson, from the original: “But to bemoan the compromises of performance’s aesthetic interdependence is also to assume a clear division between the autonomous performance event and its heteronomous environment. What if the formal challenge of performance lies in the ambiguity of such a division? What if, for instance, the formal parameters of the form include the audience relation, casting such inter-subjective exchange, not as the extraneous context that surrounds it, but as the material of performance itself? What if performance challenges strict divisions about where the art ends and the rest of the world begins?” (Jackson, 2013, p. 26)

93 As explained by Fischer-Lichte: “Does the perceptual order of presence, for instance, tend to produce meanings as sensations and emotions that are articulated physically and can be perceived by others as physiological, affective, energetic, and motor reactions? Likewise, does the perceptual order of representation tend to stimulate thoughts, ideas, and emotions which are articulated internally but hardly ever grow to a point at which they overwhelm the spectators, allowing them to maintain a certain distance to what they perceived? The performances discussed so far seem to confirm this conclusion.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 149)

as visual meaning and action possible. The indiscipline in this case, we want to stress, is that departing from an aesthetics of indiscipline, and the understanding that design is the social situation, produces a different graphic design practice and understanding of graphic design as a discipline. Drawing from Kohn, design is still a “form” that propagates in effortless efficacy through constraints on possibility, following the worldly tendency of all things to take habits (Kohn, 2013, p. 66). Still the case demonstrates how it is not because we come to have things to design but actually when we abandon old forms that we can catch glimpses, however situated, of the whole unknown discipline to which we all contribute. Something that is very ordinary for the people of Cova da Moura, suddenly becomes extraordinary in their hands. Each human-flag is as an “act of revelation” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.36) that enhances and amplifies unique particularities that make Cova da Moura always and already an extraordinary place. The day of the anniversaries is a “minor design activism” that works as a visual disturbance (Lenskjold, Olander and Halse, 2015). Not a side-effect, nor an objective of a designing process, but a whole design event that generates another possible everyday and neighbourhood, still always already there. With and through the flags, with and through design, people of Cova da Moura talk back in a ludic way to the broader midst of very complex discursive practices and power structures, as the right to respond and be seen as something else. The human-flags describe the world of Cova da Moura in ways that beyond a political campaign they can open up what can be said about the neighbourhood. In a more quotidian, subtle and colourful manner, they bring a non-relationship into relationship and give place to non-place.

Case Summary

Design is the situation

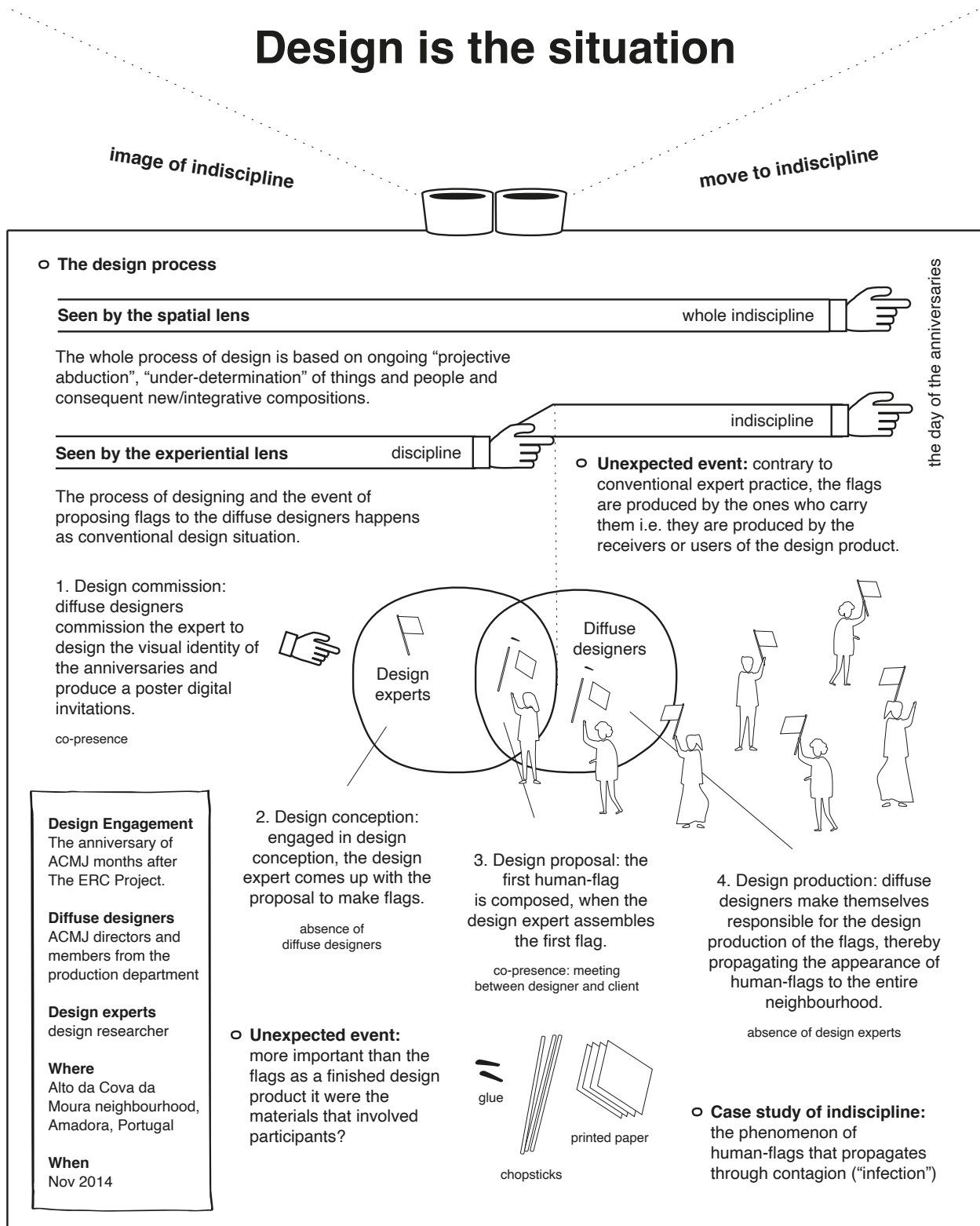


Diagram 9. Case summary through the binocular of indiscipline



3.3

Beginnings not ends

**3.3.1 Celebrating the 2 de Maio neighbourhood:
a journey through pictures**

**3.1.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline:
rehearsing the future**

3.1.3 Beginnings not ends



3.3.1 Celebrating the 2 de Maio neighbourhood: a journey through pictures

In the scope of a commission to design the visual identity of the BIP/ZIP project “2 de Maio todos os dias”⁹⁴ and the graphic materials to communicate and support the project’s activities, this case is about the process of designing one of those materials, when the community, the project team and its partners were organized together to produce the event to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in the neighbourhood.

‘2 de Maio todos os dias’, or ‘2nd of May everyday’, was a community project funded by municipal funds within the BIP/ZIP⁹⁵ programme, that happened between July 2013 and July 2014⁹⁶ in the neighbourhood 2 de Maio in Lisbon. The aim was to improve living conditions in the neighbourhood through a series of activities that engaged dwellers of 2 de Maio to tackle specific issues and become co-responsible for the respective interventions and transformation processes.

Through the establishment of a local partnership between the Ajuda district Ward, the two organizations in the neighbourhood, the social non-profit organization dedicated to children and senior care ‘Associação de Actividades Sociais do Bairro 2 de Maio’, the residents’ association ‘Associação de Moradores do Bairro 2 de Maio’, and GESTUAL, the project was founded on ten main tracks:

1. refurbish a store floor to become a community house;
2. continue GESTUAL’s spatial diagnosis and mapping of issues in the neighbourhood;
3. design and implement public space interventions to improve spatial conditions;
4. carry out short courses and workshops, fostering the proximity and close relation with the Lisbon School of Architecture through GESTUAL, as a tactic to bring external people to the neighbourhood;
5. design waste management and recycling activities to make residents co-responsible for cleaning and maintaining the neighbourhood clean;
6. create a time bank and voluntary group for exchanging services among the community;

94 Funded by municipal funds through BIP/ZIP Lisboa Program 2014. Project co-created and coordinated by urban planners Gonalo Folgado, Joo Martins, Rui Miranda, Luigi Mesisca. Consultants: Isabel Raposo (GESTUAL/CIAUD/FAUL), Manuela Mendes (CIES and CIAUD/FAUL) Graphic design: Ines Veiga; Local Partners: Associao de Actividades Sociais do Bairro 2 de Maio, Associao de Moradores do Bairro 2 de Maio, Junta de Freguesia da Ajuda.

95 BIP/ZIP program is a funding mechanism created by the Lisbon Council to foster the generation of local partnerships with the purpose to improve living, spatial and social, conditions of neighbourhoods (B for Bairro, the Portuguese word for neighbourhood) and areas (Z for Zones) which are considered a priority for social, economic and spatial intervention (IP).

96 See the timeline of the ‘2nd of May everyday’ project in Appendix C.

Figure 36 Painting the letters with children.

Figure 37 Aerial photograph of the city of Lisbon. The neighbourhood 2 de Maio in front of the Lisbon School of Architecture in the Ajuda district on the west part of the city next to the ‘Monsanto’ forest.



7. create a resident's card to foster the sense of belonging and co-responsibility for the place;
8. design a senior vacation programme;
9. design an urban farming framework;
10. design and implement community events to foster social bonds among the community and different ethnic groups.

Set within a complex everyday dynamic, the ten tracks aimed to restore the dignity of 2 de Maio neighbourhood enacting a process of transformation that involved and could be continued by the residents themselves.

Named after the date of 2nd of May in 1974, when a number of families living in precarious settlements around the city moved during the Carnation Revolution to occupy the empty buildings, the neighbourhood 2 de Maio is located right in front of the Faculty of Architecture. Similar to other neighbourhoods with similar architectural style, it belonged to a private Foundation created and managed by the dictatorship's state administration. The land was private, although housing was public and meant to accommodate members of the state and state services. At the time when the military coup and national upheaval overthrew the state's regime around 25th of April in 1974, the buildings in 2 de Maio were not yet finished. The absence of windows, doors or even stairs to access different floors, made occupation not a peaceful process. The families arriving first had to protect their new home from others who were arriving each day and night. The people in 2 de Maio tell stories about shootings in which dwellers organized together with guns to confront the newcomers, and stories about ghosts, or when the newcomers dressed in white cloths wondered the streets and buildings at night in order to scare families off their homes.

A week after the 25th of April, the occupation movement settled. On the 2nd of May, the families that remained organized together to claim legal ownership of their home and negotiate with the City Council who was responsible for completing the works, which besides the buildings included finishing the roads and public spaces. That was the beginning of the residents' association that was founded officially in 1975. At the time, however, only an informal agreement between the occupants and the City Council was possible. The private Foundation which owned the land and was responsible for the site construction, had just entered the legal process of being dismantled. Only in time, the Municipality would become the public owner of the site and landlord of the present occupants, who had been registered by the Council as residents and allowed to stay in place, although, on the condition that any intervention would be of their own expense and responsibility.

Completing the works at 2 de Maio was, therefore, a slow process, contingent the duration of the legal process and whether families were able to gather or not

Figure 38 The 2 de Maio neighbourhood: the view from the Lisbon School of Architecture - University of Lisbon. Streets and public spaces in the 2 de Maio neighbourhood. The square in front of the store floor in building no. 13, was called by the group of students 'Largo 13' and was adopted by the people in 2 de Maio as such, during the '2nd of May everyday' project © João Martins

the means and conditions to finish their own homes. While this happened for the majority of residents, who through the residents' organization shared means and materials to put windows, doors, paint, arrange stairs and pass ways, the main roads and public spaces continued to be left untouched. Throughout the years, beyond an overall spatial degradation, it was the perception of abandonment that the neighbourhood 2 de Maio conveyed. The roads and public spaces were not only unfinished, but also filthy, making visible a much more complex reality within the territory. Despite a close relationship with the City Council, and the development of local groups and organizations, the neighbourhood was known in the surrounding areas for persistent poverty, high rates of unemployment amongst adults, school dropouts amongst children, drug-dealing and theft dynamics, as well as ethnic conflicts among residents, especially with and between the gipsy families.

Reporting these insights to a teacher, who happened to be the founder of GESTUAL, a group of urban planning students in the Lisbon School of Architecture, around 2011, proposed to engage with the residents' organization and the Ajuda ward to map social and spatial challenges and potentials in the neighbourhood. Becoming members of GESTUAL, the constant presence of the students in 2 de Maio left residents curious. Asking who they were and what was the agenda, after some time, a great number and variety of residents also began to complain about the Council's overall indifference and habitual top-down approach to the community. Over the years there had been quarrels with the City Council workers who came to the neighbourhood to implement urban planning and public space interventions without community consultation and were either expelled by residents or the construction sites robbed of machines and materials leaving processes half done. Between 2012 and 2013, the students decided to establish a partnership with the local organizations and design a process for the improvement of the living conditions of 2 de Maio to be summited as a proposal for the BIP/ZIP funding programme. The approach was to engage the residents in specific activities that addressed the different tracks through participatory dynamics. To make these activities, while the partners took the role of co-producers facilitating resources and general conditions, the main drivers and executors inside the neighbourhood and directly with the people were the students.

After the proposal was done, some residents proposed to organize a community event. Seeing it as an invitation to widely communicate the project, moreover, to rehearse the internal articulation between the partners as co-producers, the students proposed to help and suggested the small square in front of the store floor that would be refurbished for its location. The store floor was meant to become a community house, named 'Casa para Todos' or 'Home for Everyone', and accommodate a nursery room, a computers' room and an office for the residents'

Figure 39 (top) 'The Neighbour Party' © João Martins
 Figure 40 When the project was awarded funding the group of students created a social media page where they posted the updates and news about the project. 'We won' was the first illustration they made and post.
 Public meeting at the social non-profit organization 'Associação de Actividades Sociais do Bairro 2 de Maio' to present the BIP/ZIP '2nd of May everyday' project to the community © João Martins, Gonçalo Folgado and Rui Miranda
 Figure 41 The rooster was an interesting element to explore. © Inês Veiga



COM O APOIO DE :



PROJECTO

2 DE MAIO

todos os dias

Agricultura Urbana



Formação
Workshops



Recolha de Lixo
Limpeza



Banco de Tempo



Convívio
Festas





organization. Then, the idea of doing a community event in ‘Largo 13’ was to attract as much attention and people to the place where one of the main tracks of the project would eventually take place and the space would be temporarily used as the headquarters of the ‘2nd of May everyday’ project.

‘The Neighbour Party’ was a public barbecue and show of the local children dance and sports’ groups, mainly organized by the residents, wherein the partnership was able to explain the project to a number of residents who had not yet known what was happening in the neighbourhood.

In May 2013, when the results came out and the project was awarded funding, the students decided to make a more formal public presentation of the ‘2nd of May everyday’ project in the neighbourhood, inside the gymnasium of one of the partners, the social non-profit organization.

Winning the Council’s attention, another important aspect became to create a visual identity of the project, through which the neighbourhood itself could regain recognition in the city. To design the visual identity of the project, GESTUAL invited the designer participating in the ERC project in the Cova da Moura neighbourhood to make a proposal.

Picking up on the idea of the bell tower with the rooster which mark the skyline of the neighbourhood, we composed the name ‘2 de Maio’ in capital letters with Knockout⁹⁷ a narrow geometric typeface to create the visual effect of a rectangle box to resemble the rectangular buildings. Opting to use the number ‘2’ instead

97 Knockout is a typeface known as the American sans serif.

Figure 42 The visual identity for the ‘2nd of May everyday’ project, drawing from the main visual features of the neighborhood: the horizontal building blocks and the rooster; and the main tracks of the project: urban farming, courses and workshops, waste management, time and service exchange, events and conviviality. © Design: Inês Veiga

Figure 43 ‘Clean, play and recycle’ a waste management activity with children in the neighbourhood © João Martins

Figure 44 ‘COME! clean, play and recycle’ workshop template posters © Design: Inês Veiga

of the word ‘two’ or ‘dois’, we substituted the dot in the ‘I’ letter, which in capital letters is often missing, for the rooster which suddenly disrupts the rectangular shape yet appears as if it belongs to the composition. Playing with the idea of something principle that on a secondary level of information is meant to occur ‘everyday’, the round shape of the logotype emerged when the words ‘project’ and ‘everyday’ set in Sanchez⁹⁸ were positioned as headers and footers of the main body.

Realising the different tracks of the project could be organized into themes, we created icons to identity each track. The variations of the logotype would appear in the respective communication materials for its corresponding activities.

At the same time as designing the visual identity, an activity to address the waste management track took place. It was a collaboration with a nutritionist that for one day proposed the children of the social non-profit organization to ‘clean, play and recycle’, that is, to collect garbage around the neighbourhood and then create new things with it.

Using the content of this activity as the basis for doing a mock-up and template for possible communication materials, a graphic language emerged in the combination between photography, strong colours, and the typographic families used in the logotype.

The group of students immediately took on the visual identity proposal. From that moment, the designer became responsible for making the graphic content of all the materials that emerged in the course of the project to support or communicate the activities.

Following the activity with children, the works to refurbish the store floor began. Taking longer than expected, the group of students thought to invite a group of artists to intervene in the public scape in front of the ‘Home for Everyone’.

The purposes the activity were to signal that the project was ongoing, to invite people to participate in building a balcony made of pallets for the ‘Home for everyone’ and gather support for the enquiries in all buildings that the group of students were undertaking to identify challenges and potentials for possible future interventions in the neighbourhood. To start, the activity became to clean the surrounding area and paint the public space walls with colourful drawings to contrast with the white buildings. So far, children were the residents of 2 de Maio who went to meet the group of students every day at ‘Largo 13’, therefore, they became an inspiration for the artists to make the drawings and paint.

Only few residents that were new to the project, passed by ‘Largo 13’ during painting. Some of them were the parents of the children, who asked about the happening, although none actually joined the making of the balcony nor the enquiries. Thinking about creating a group of volunteers for the ‘2nd of May

98 Sanchez is a typeface designed by Latinotype.

Figure 45 ‘LET’S GO EVERYONE! Clean the House for everyone and prick walls’ was the poster published to announce the works were setting off, moreover, to invite people to volunteer in the project and support the group of students © Design: Inês Veiga

Figure 46 The refurbishment of the store floor to become the ‘Home for Everyone’ © João Martins

[illegible]



everyday' project, the group of students extended the invitation to participate in the refurbishment of the store floor to the School of Architecture making an open call for students, while issued a public call in the social networks.

The refurbishment lasted the entire duration of the project and involved a wider group of partners that sponsored the works and construction. In the final stages of the process, it also relied on the participation of some residents who volunteered few hours as construction workers and electricians.

In the course of the project, two main engagements with the Lisbon School of Architecture occurred. One which involved design students from the bachelor's course to design branding and possible services with a group of residents who had set up small and informal businesses and activities in the neighbourhood, namely, selling ice cream from home, collecting edible plants from the forest of Monsanto for cooking and therapeutic uses, children after school dance group, shepherd goats near by the neighbourhood. And another which contributed specifically to the track of improving the public space of the neighbourhood and consisted in a workshop with architecture students who applied to participate through an open call. The purpose was to transform the square in front of the social non-profit organization in 2 de Maio, called 'Largo do Cantinho', and take advantage of the view over the river in the corner.

Grounded in the participatory approach of GESTUAL, through several iterations and workshop encounters with the residents in the area, the architecture students designed several transformation proposals, that could not exceed 5000 euros sponsored by the partnership, that were discussed and voted in a final public session with the residents. The winning proposal had the support of the City Council workers to be implemented, although it faced some challenges when the money limit was reached. The proposal had to be simplified, and this was done by the students together with GESTUAL and the '2nd of May everyday' partnership. Throughout the '2nd of May everyday' project, the implicit conflicts between residents at times became visible. Whenever activities involved any person from the gipsy community some residents did not participated in the activities. Whenever some residents participated, it was the gipsy community who chose not be involved in the action. Directly approached to address these matters, the responses from either side were that they didn't want to cause any disorder, so they preferred to not mingle with the others. Still, on few occasions, the matters at stake overrode the differences between residents, who actually mingled in collective discussions and actions. This was especially visible, during the track about urban farming.

Figure 47 The collective 'Image Colour' painting the walls in front of the 'Home for everyone' in the 'Largo 13' in the company of children. The title of the painting was 'B2M com Futuro' which means the 2 de Maio neighbourhood 'has future'. Volunteers and children helping in the refurbishment of the 'Home for everyone'. The 'Home for Everyone' inaugurated. © João Martins





In the neighbourhood, there was no formal gardening space, although some residents informally grew their own produce. Through a participatory process that was called ‘Planear para Plantar’ or ‘Planning to Plant’, the group of students involved the residents in co-designing and managing an area that the City Council had assigned for gardening in the new urban plan they were developing for the district. This plan affected the 2 de Maio community directly by encompassing the refurbishment of streets and public spaces as well as a reorganization of the traffic inside the neighbourhood. Specifically, in terms of the gardens, the Council allocated a formal space to accommodate a community garden. It would have specific points of access to water, municipal rules of maintenance and permits of specific crops – for instance, it was forbidden to grow fruit trees besides vegetable produce, – still, it was to be managed by the people. In this perspective, the distribution of slots and size areas was to be negotiated between the residents who were responsible for using and keeping the garden. In parallel to identifying who were the residents with gardens, through the photovoice method, what were their challenges and who wanted to take part and lead in the new community garden process, the group of students set up another activity.

Related with Permaculture and modes of composting, the purpose was to strengthen the relationship between the residents, who had a garden, by inviting them to exchange knowledge about gardening and build compost boxes for their own homes and gardens. The activity also consisted in building an herb’ garden in the shape of a spiral, as a form of teaching Permaculture values and engage furthermore residents, who might be curious about gardening, the ‘Planning to Plant’ activity or ‘2nd of May everyday’ project. Communicating the activity through the social networks, a diverse group of people enrolled and with them residents with and with no gardens participated and appeared throughout.

Figure 48 The participatory process between the students of the School of Architecture and the residents. The ‘Largo do Cantinho’ before and after. © João Martins

Figure 49 Poster to announce the workshop and idea competition for the refurbishment of the ‘Largo do Cantinho’ © Design: Inês Veiga





Some things were in fact changing in the 2 de Maio neighbourhood, from the perspective of the City Council. To appreciate the work done, at some point, they offered the partnership to make a poster about the project to be displayed in the municipal network of advertising outdoors across the city.

Approaching the 40th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in 25th of April, 2014, the Council proposed the partnership to design a community event in the neighbourhood to be included in the Council's cultural agenda and formal celebrations to signal the date. The 40th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution was the mark of the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the 2 de Maio neighbourhood. Therefore, already before, few residents and some of the partners had suggested that some kind of party should be organised for the occasion.

When the group of students went to meet with the residents to discuss what they were envisioning, a week of diverse activities from the 25th of April to the 2nd of May was planned. Explaining the idea to the partnership and the Council, doing a week festival was seen as way to bring the neighbourhood together around the

Figure 50 Interviewing and identifying, through the photovoice method, the residents who garden. The Permaculture and composting workshop was led by 'PermaTorus' and the gardener José Henrique with residents and external people © Luigi Mesisca, João Martins

Figure 51 Before the refurbishment of the 'Home for everyone' began, the group of students had a series of photographs taken with children playing with construction and agriculture tools. Deciding on a headline that claimed 'We are changing the 2 de Maio neighbourhood! Join us!' we use one of these pictures to design the poster that was featured in the banners of the Municipality of Lisbon across the city. © João Martins, Design: Inês Veiga

24 abril [5th.] Local: Largo do 13

11h CAMINHO DA LIBERDADE
20h COMES E BEBES
22h BAILARICO
00h ESPECTÁCULO DE LUZ

25 abril [6th.] Local: Miradouro e Largo do 13

10h DAR VOZ AO POVO Miradouro
ESCLARECIMENTO HABITAÇÃO CML Largo do 13
11h PINTURAS MURAIS
19h INAUGURAÇÃO CAMINHO DA LIBERDADE
& EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS
20h COMES E BEBES
21h DISCURSOS Largo do 13
Capitão de Abril Ramiro Rodrigues
Paula Marques, Vereadora da
Câmara Municipal de Lisboa
Helena Roseta, Presidente da
Assembleia Municipal de Lisboa
Osvaldo Sousa, Presidente da
Associação de Moradores
22h PROJEÇÃO DE FILME & COMENTÁRIOS Largo do 13
"As Operações do SAAL", João Dias
Dinamizador: Vereadora Paula Marques,
Câmara Municipal de Lisboa

26 abril [Sáb.] Largo do 13 e Campo da Matinha

10h WORKSHOP MIRADOURO
PINTURAS MURAIS
11h JOGO DA CORDA
JOGOS SEM FRONTEIRAS

15 às 18h EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS

15h FOOTBALL INFANTIL Largo do Lote 13
FOOTBALL FEMININO Campo da Matinha.
FOOTBALL MASCULINO Campo da Matinha.
20h "COMES E BEBES"

27 abril [Dom.] Local: Miradouro e Largo da Torre do Galo

9 às 18h WORKSHOP MIRADOURO
10h PINTURAS MURAIS
11 às 16h CAMPEONATO DE SKATE Largo da Torre do Galo
15h CAÇA AO TESOURO Corrida pelo Bairro.
20h COMES E BEBES

28 abril [2nd.] Local: Bairro e Largo do 13

10h PINTURAS MURAIS
15 às 18h EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS
20h COMES E BEBES
21h30 PROJEÇÃO DE FILME & COMENTÁRIOS Largo do 13
"Os Índios da Meia Praia", António da Cunha Teles
Dinamizador: Helena Roseta, Presidente da
Assembleia Municipal de Lisboa e Paula Marques,
Vereadora da Câmara Municipal de Lisboa

29 abril [3rd.] Local: Bairro e Largo do 13

10h PINTURAS MURAIS
15 às 18h EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS
20h COMES E BEBES
21h30 PROJEÇÃO DE FILME & COMENTÁRIOS Largo do 13

30 abril [4th.] Local: Bairro e Largo do 13

10h PINTURAS MURAIS
15 às 18h EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS
20h COMES E BEBES

1 maio [5th.] Local: Miradouro e Largo do 13

10h PINTURAS MURAIS
WORKSHOP MIRADOURO
15 às 18h EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS
21h30 FACTOR B2M Largo do 13
Talentos do Bairro 2 de Maio: música,
dança, teatro, truques, desporto.

2 maio [6th.] Local: Largo do 13

10h PINTURAS MURAIS
PINTURA MAPA SIG
15 às 18h EXPOSIÇÃO FOGOS
18h DEBATE "MOVIMENTO POPULAR PREC"
& PROJEÇÃO DE FILME "MEMÓRIA FUTURA B2M"
19h APRESENTAÇÃO BIP/ZIP 2 DE MAIO
TODOS OS DIAS
20h COMES E BEBES
21h DISCURSOS
Paula Marques, Vereadora da Câmara Municipal de Lisboa
Helena Roseta, Presidente da Assembleia
Municipal de Lisboa
Osvaldo Sousa, Presidente da Associação de Moradores
1st Ocupantes do Bairro 2 de Maio
22h FESTA DE ENCERRAMENTO

production and happening of a common event. Moreover, 'the party' might be a critical way⁹⁹ (Nogueira, 2017) in which to bring forth a shared memory when all the families united to overcome the struggles to own the place where, after all, they continued to live and remained together.

Ranging from music shows, a street art exhibition and painting building' facades, sport activities, food, drinks and fireworks, the group of students became responsible for negotiating and arranging the activities with the residents, while the local organizations gave support in making the events possible. Acknowledging the limited resources of the organizations, the City Council made itself co-responsible for supplying the resources and logistics needed, as well as the visual and public communication of the event.

Some activities occurred in other buildings and places of the neighbourhood, namely, the sport activities and the street art exhibition and paintings, but the main location of the festival was the 'Largo 13'. It was the place where the stage for music shows and the supporting tent to serve food and drinks were situated. It was

99 According to Isabel Nogueira (2017, p. 66) in a book about Performance in the public sphere, the seventies in Portugal, especially around the times of the Carnation Revolution, were times when the public space was an intensely lived experience. Affirming the freedom of speech, and the freedom to encounter and be with others, diverse groups of people and grassroots initiatives went to the streets to reclaim and renegotiate urban planning or housing issues with each other and public institutions, to teach a large portion of the population to read and write, and 'the party' became a social arena and experimental space to cross artistic and institutional boundaries between different knowledges, languages and media.

Figure 52 The final programme of the festival, in portuguese © Municipality of Lisbon CML

Figure 53 The festival week to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution and the occupation of the buildings by some of the current residents who by that found the 2 de Maio neighbourhood. Sports, mural painting, music concerts, movie night, fireworks and the building façade that became polemical when a group of residents became aware that the painting depicted a Gipsy couple. © Inês Veiga, João Martins







where the fireworks happened on the two main dates, 25th of April and 2nd of May. The place where a movie produced by the municipal communication department in collaboration with the group of students was projected. It was about stories of the occupation of the neighbourhood in 1974, and combined archive footage with shootings made during the production of the festival, which featured the children interviewing the residents who had lived through those times.

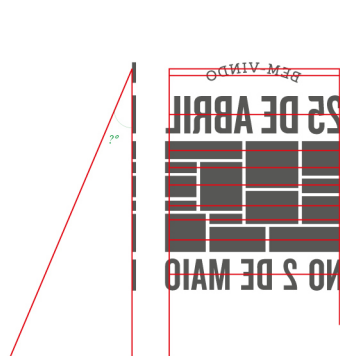
Of everything that happened during the production and happening of the festival, there was one activity we wish to report more thoroughly.

In the view of preparing the neighbourhood for hosting a celebration, besides decorating the streets with flowers, for which we organized a ‘flower workshop’, the designer suggested to make a welcome sign for external visitors.

Free from the role of communicating the festival, the idea and focus was producing a three-dimensional installation to be at the entrance of the neighbourhood to mark it as a place of relevance in the city’s network of celebrations.

Figure 54 The sport activities with children included a workshop to design mobile miniature football nets. The workshop was organized in collaboration with the Maker’s Lab of the School of Architecture where a group of children went to learn how to work with the machines and accompany the whole process of production © João Martins, Gonçalo Folgado and Inês Veiga

Figure 55 The flower workshop occurred several days before the festival, gathering mainly children and senior women © João Martins, Inês Veiga



The spatial organization of the buildings was designed so that the 2 de Maio neighbourhood has two entry points by car, which are next to each other closing the loop from above and from below.

Designing the sign installation as a typographic poster to be placed in the middle of the triangle where these two entry points meet, it consisted in attaching letters and tablets with festival highlights inscribed, to a thin structure, tall enough to be seen from a distance.

The partnership and the Council approved the idea, delegating to the municipal production workshop to accompany the process. Using the same material that the Council had supplied for making other things for the festival, namely the miniature soccer nets for the children's football competition during the festival, the group of students and the designer thought the letters could be laser cut in plywood at the School of Architecture and, then, painted by the children in the neighbourhood. This way the children would have a distraction on the last days before the festival would set off, meanwhile the group of students could focus thoroughly on arranging things with the residents.

Explaining the idea to the group of municipal engineers and craftsman, who were responsible for supporting the production of all the celebration events across the city, they seemed sceptic about having a light weight structure to support the plywood letters and tablets. Still, they had understood the commission and would contact the group as soon as they had something.

The week before the festival, there was not enough material to build the entire sign. A large amount of the plywood had been assigned for an idea competition with students from the School of Architecture to build a belvedere in the neighbourhood. Taking into account that there was not yet a precise idea from the Council about who were the musicians to perform and who were the artists to paint the building facades in 2 de Maio, thus, what would be inscribed in the tablets would be merely the words 'music', 'street art', 'food & drinks', etc. Only the letters 'WELCOME 25 OF APRIL AT 2 OF MAY' were laser cut and brought to the neighbourhood.

Counting on the arrival of the structure any minute before the evening of the 24th of April, the activity carried on in the morning while the group of students arranged the final details of other activities. Concerned the activity might end too quickly, the children formed a line and took turns to paint each one letter at the time. Meanwhile, some residents were passing through 'Largo 13'. Some of them stopped by the activity to watch the children paint, giving them encouragement to continue. Others who were precisely the parents, immediately asked the designer 'who are you? Are you a social worker or cultural animator? Do you work for the Ajuda ward? Are you a school teacher?' Apparently, the activity was not new in the neighbourhood. It depicted past events in the neighbourhood wherein children were in the public space, close to home, engaged in learning and developing creative

Figure 56 The triangle marks the entry and exit of the neighbourhood by car.
Figure 57 The 3D poster designed to welcome visitors in the neighbourhood. It was composed by letters and tablets where highlights were inscribed, for instance, the name of the artists who were to perform and other keywords such as 'party', ' food&drinks', 'dance', and others © Design: Inês Veiga







and craft abilities. Overseen by an adult who was usually the schoolteacher, there had been a long time since they have seen that happen in the neighbourhood. Moreover, a long time since they had seen their children that committed and absorbed in doing something artful. Not quite understanding what a designer does, everything became clear when they were in front of a student from the School of Architecture. The activity was part of the '2nd of May everyday' project, but beyond that, what was important for the parents was that the children and the community in 2 de Maio needed more of those kinds of activities.

As we finished painting, the letters were ready before lunch. Expecting the structure to arrive in the afternoon, we had put a string to hold the letters so they did not lose presence meanwhile we waited.

The string could not hold too many letters at once. It was too loose but whenever we attempted to stretch it either fell or the letters began to turn on themselves. We were getting frustrated and the children were getting bored. Time was slowing down as they wanted more action, and whatever we were doing, whether it made sense or not, became undeniably conspicuous as if there was nothing else to do with the letters except to wait for the structure to arrive. Suddenly the children started to take the other letters and compose them in sequence. Music was already on, while dancing they called others to join, and some adults, who were coming in and out of the 'Largo 13' arranging the food and drinks for the evening, started to join as well. Disentangling the letters from the string, the children and the adults hold each letter and began to compose themselves in order and in different compositions for others to take pictures.

Soon after, we received the news that the structure would arrive in a few days. Not knowing what else to do with the letters, still the festival would officially begin in the evening, we decided to attach them to the wall and instead hold the flowers on the string. This way all these elements might signal to visitors, still, that 'Largo 13' was the right place where the festival was taking place.

Until the structure arrived, the letters remained on site in 'Largo 13'. The flowers went back to decorate the 'House for everyone' and were being given to visitors. On the 28th of April in the morning, the craftsman appeared at the entrance of the neighbourhood to install the sign.

Figure 58 (pp. 210-211) The letters in the neighbourhood. Children playing with the letters. Painting the letters with children: the children forming a line, some adults stopped by the activity, some were the parents of children. © João Martins

Figure 59 Waiting for the structure series © João Martins



The structure was enormous, taller and heavier than we had imagined, also meant to hold more elements than the letters, hence the delay. It worked better, as the craftsman explained, under conditions of wind and possible acts of vandalism. Once the W, E, L, C, O, M, E and the 2, 5, O, F, A, P, R, I, L, A, T, 2, O, F, M, A, Y were attached to the structure, the 3D poster and sign to welcome visitors in the neighbourhood and introduced them to the festival was done.

The installation of the 3D poster happened on the same day as the installation of another structure that in the meantime came to replace the belvedere contest and workshop. To note, the Council was taking the festival as an opportunity to regain the trust of the community and further the works on the streets and public spaces without the usual violent conflicts.

Still, the residents did not remain indifferent. They came to ask questions and discuss the reasons and agenda of every presence, action, gesture and object in the neighbourhood whenever they recognized a student, a partner of the project, or met with Council workers and external participants in the festival, whether artists or visitors.

Figure 60 Waiting for the structure series © João Martins

Figure 61 The letters in the 'Largo 13' attached to the wall. The flowers decorating the string. © Inês Veiga

Figure 62 The arrival of the structure: the municipal craftsman installing the sign attaching the letters to the structure © Inês Veiga





The festival was making the neighbourhood visible to the residents, who began to recognize value in some interventions and argue against others. In those arguments, the remarkable thing was that the Council was seen a partner, instead of an enemy, co-responsible for taking care of the neighbourhood where they had lived and were every day.

In the end, the project was able to complete all the tracks with the exception of the time bank and service exchange between residents, the residents' card, and the senior vacation programme, which still became a single bus trip to a swimming pool outside the city, for which not only seniors but entire families applied to participate. Beyond that, changing the image of the Council and enabling the appearance of external people in the neighbourhood, opened the door for the employment of several residents in different areas, and the emergence of a third organization in the neighbourhood. The 'Friends of B2M' is an association of residents, former residents, students, municipal workers and other companies and institutions' workers, who met throughout and through the '2nd of May everyday' project and its activities and decided to continue interact for and with the community.

Figure 63 The 3D poster © Inês Veiga, João Martins

Figure 64 During the festival, whenever dwellers recognized a Council member, they immediately went to discuss collective and individual issues. © Inês Veiga

3.3.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline: rehearsing the future

Observing the 3D poster at the entrance of the neighbourhood, suddenly it began to appear obsolete. It was as if it had reached a point of being used up. Why?

Before the letters were installed in the iron structure, that is, during the process of designing the 3D poster two episodes momentarily transformed the design situation. The encounter with the parents of the children while we were painting the letters, or the moment when the people collected the letters to take pictures, these two moments opened the question for what might come next in the design process. Either by anticipating a landscape of other possible purposes for design or by anticipating the end of designing through other possible compositions of participants. The fact that the 3D poster still emerged as the envisioned design outcome at the entrance of the neighbourhood these two episodes emerged more emphatically and with particular intensity from the point of view of research. Beyond the primary function to welcome visitors in the neighbourhood had the letters been more relevant inside the neighbourhood for the people of 2 de Maio than the 3D poster itself? Who decided what was meaningful to do? Who or what set this was a visual communication design practice or something else?

Considering the two episodes as two “time pockets” bounded by the appearance of unexpected others in the process of designing the 3D poster, the binocular of indiscipline reveals how both situations radicalized design as an experience of indiscipline.

3.3.2.1 The figure of the user

In the moment of painting, the “figure of the user” was pivotal to generate indiscipline (Gentes, 2017, p. 62). Not because it determined a concrete group as a target of design actions, but regard how “the user” becomes a radically elusive figure, shifting and even emerging as a complex unknown when the parents appear in painting the letters. Let us take a closer look.

Painting the letters was a procedural step of the designing process towards producing the 3D poster. But as in theatre and art performance, it happened as a real event through the actions of real bodies in real space (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 36). The scene depicts children who live in the neighbourhood taking turns to paint wood letters in red and yellow guided by an adult. Recognising their own children painting we can speculate that the parents experience a “synthetic perception, shaped not only by sight and sound but by physical sensations of the entire body” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 36). It is after all their child closer to home learning

and doing creative activities outside the school. So, the parents begin to compose what is happening. Perceiving similarities with previous events in the past, they transform the event momentarily into another thing. The designer becomes a school teacher and designing the 3D poster becomes an activity to engage children in craft making. As the parents eventually discover, however, painting the letters does not match entirely the world they are invoking. There is a tension between what they are imagining and the reality that is in front of them because the scene is authentic and not a simulacrum (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.68). Children are not pretending to do the activity, they are actually painting the letters enthusiastically exercising abilities, senses and bodies. Neither the children nor the designer experienced or perceived what they were doing as a rehearsal, a staged event or fictive reality. The scene signified and was experienced by participants exactly as what it was being performed. The appearance of the parents, consequently, generated an unexpected but important claim about the situation. “The activity meets the user” (Gentes, 2017, p. 66). Drawing from Gentes, painting letters was advancing the “needs and the benefits that are granted through the use of the object.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 70) “Use” in the parents’ perspective “coincides with an emphasis on dematerialization.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 66) Through the use of the letters, pencils and ink, the children’s need for creative activities was being addressed since they were benefiting from the experience itself, that is, the performance of real bodies in real spaces. In Gentes view, the parents were pointing to something “[i]n the paradigm of “use and gratifications”, [the fact that] social life provokes needs that can be gratified through diverse means, of which the use of media is one.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 70) The children as users were “someone who manipulates a device and activates a system that supports the activity. The users can accomplish tasks thanks to the device” (Gentes, 2017, p. 74). Affirming their children as “the user”, the parents were recognizing the aesthetic phenomenon of design not in the letters but present in the whole event or system of painting.

From the point of view of design, although, the children were interacting with the letters but were not the receivers nor “the users” in the situation. They were producers engaged in designing something else that was external to them and still in the making: the 3D poster. In contrast with the parents, the children and the designer view “the user” as another figure who “is primarily an interpreter of information and a communicating person.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 73) “Use” for them was an activity kept for after the designing process because use consisted in the visual perception of the object they were designing to perform as a carrier or holder of information. The children “as producers” were someone who manipulates and transforms a device (the letters) activating a system (painting) that moved the design process forward, through the device, towards the accomplishment of a pre-conceived future end (Gentes, 2017, p. 74). Engaged in conventional design

practice, still, the close proximity, ease of use and accessibility of and with the letters as devices emerged strikingly conspicuous when the parents pointed out the situation was not an action of production but like another kind of use. Were the children designing a device for another public? Or were they making something for themselves, receiving and using a device? In what sense, the gratification of making something for themselves derived from designing something to welcome other people in the neighbourhood, or from performing the design activity itself that was ‘beneficial’ for them? After all, were children producers or receivers in the design process?

When the parents appeared, the present event was no longer only about designing the 3D poster. The children were no longer only producers. The experience of real bodies in real spaces highlighted how the design process generates several “figures” of the user and ways of using (Gentes, 2017, p. 18), which can trigger participants to rethink not only the needs at stake, and that were being advanced, but also their own roles in the situation. Depending on how they positioned themselves, whether as designers, as producers, as devices, or as users, it caused a multifaceted experience of design, co-constructed by the different symbolic¹⁰⁰ images of each figure and how these were inhabited or embodied by particular participants (Gentes, 2017, p. 74; Kohn, 2013).

In sum, the “different facets of the “users” could not be reduced to their needs” (Gentes, 2017, p. 77), as well as the different facets of the device could not be reduced to a single participant, action or individual project.¹⁰¹ The “under-determination” of the user meant the “under-determination” of the producer which brought forth different practices performed in the same act. In this view, it did not matter how much or how little the parents’ assumptions deviated from reality. The scene expanded the view towards different kinds of everyday made actual¹⁰² through its bodily-material manifestations that recognised the scene was not an end to something other than itself. Actually, it was already an end on its own right.

3.3.2.2 When the future comes to affect the present

As we wait for the structure to arrive, the letters already painted and ready to be used suddenly appear meaningless. In attempts to maintain their presence putting them in relation to other things in space, suddenly, another form-act of the 3D

¹⁰⁰ What we mean here is the conventionally inscribed ideas of what is a designer, what is a producer, or what is a user.

¹⁰¹ As Gentes argues the situation meant “that there could be no social or natural “reductionism”. There was no technological determinism either. Working on the “user” meant that disciplines changed a number of their concepts” (Gentes, 2017, p. 77).

¹⁰² We can argue and speculate that the parents were experiencing what Thomas Binder describes as an “encounter with the possible” (Binder, 2016, p.268).

poster appears. Set in the white background of the buildings of the neighbourhood, the 3D poster emerged not given as an artefact but more immediately and authentically in the gestures of people who began to collect the letters and take pictures with them. The 3D poster was as an “event” generated by the specific tensions and relational compositions between space, bodies and letters that spaced its appearance possible and real. As far as the sequence of the letters was stabilised — which can only happen through the presence of humans, who can perceive the letters *as letters*, hence as symbols, and know how to read them in order — corporality, spatiality, timing and movement constitute the very condition of the material and semiotic presence of the 3D poster *as something else* (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 141). Turning a moment of suspension into a moment of design, once again the figure of the user and the producer became difficult to capture, precisely when using the letters meant not only the achievement of the 3D poster, as an end, but also the gratification of building and experiencing community in becoming an-*other* 3D poster inside the neighbourhood. What was then the purpose of doing the 3D poster for the entrance of the neighbourhood, if by using the letters we are already experiencing a meaningful appearance of it in the here and now? Waiting for the structure expands the movements of design in the special ways in which suspension exposed how participants in relation to each other were already transforming reality in the present.

The 3D poster was a “prediction”, that is, “an expectation of a regularity, something that has not yet come to exist but will likely come to be” (Kohn, 2014, p. 76), nevertheless without the structure there was a constellation of other possibilities opening up for what is the 3D poster and through which it may or may not be constituted.¹⁰³ The experience of real bodies in real spaces highlighted, in this pocket of time, that shifting versions of the user and the producer can also mean different versions of the *telos* and possible ends of the design situation. Regarding the happening as a continual and incessant materialising of *telos* or what design aims to project and make appear in the near future, as an end, we can grasp how the process of design (time and actions) was not suspended after all. Observing the presence of the 3D poster already tangible in the here and now, from the spatial lens, it meant the design process was still engaged in making the future 3D poster. Ever since it was an idea and the letters appeared in the neighbourhood the appearance of the 3D poster was an evolving and ever-changing “composition”. In the moment, the people collected the letters it emerged precisely as an “integrative thing” involving everything and everyone present to design the 3D poster. The happening was the exact performance of a “field of tensions” (Gentes, 2017).

¹⁰³ We may articulate with Halse et al. (2010) that “incompleteness” becomes an active force in the designing process that invites designing and involves participants to imagine, dream and experiment with various other present options.

From the lens of the experiential, the absence of the structure and the appearance of unexpected others in the design situation generated a “liminal moment”. The apparent suspension of the process of designing the 3D poster as a goal, opened up a design space for plural images and intimations of other things that were potentially possible to conceive or to design already there. At that point, the future was open¹⁰⁴ and “an experience of timelessness was created.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 132). From a non-aesthetic social event the design process turned into an aesthetic social play wherein the 3D poster was no longer cause and effect but a living thing that transformed everything and everyone present into components of its making and appearance. The design process became an autopoietic self-organizing system of possibilities, empowerment, and metamorphosis wherein a state of suspension and incompleteness¹⁰⁵ invited designing. The prediction became highly unpredictable when, instead of suspension, design was acknowledged as the situation and a continual and incessant materializing of possible versions of the 3D poster carried on creating different futures and different directions for the design process with no bracketed ending itself.

3.3.2.3. From accidents to invitations to design

Both episodes articulate a different experience of design in the special ways the user became an elusive figure and the future came to affect the present. Beyond mere accidents or interferences of the design process, rethinking the two episodes as cases of indiscipline makes visible how in those moments the design event furthers the invention of something although it does not presume the achievement of the specific invention it is about. Moreover, the appearance and presence of somebody *else* who is external to the original design process expands the situation in ways that make a difference for design itself.

Regarding a ludic activity performed by children that involves making sense of letters and reading through painting is no accident. Something like what the parents see is already happening in the present radically actual even if informal

¹⁰⁴ Here we may argue that participants were engaged in what Mazé (2016, pp. 37-38) calls “futurity”, in which particular ideas or ideals of the future are mobilised in the design process as possible preformed versions of how can things be different. That the future is open, it does not mean that it is empty, as Mazé argues, because it is “already loaded with our fantasies, aspirations and fears, persuasively designed visions and cultural imaginaries”. (Mazé, 2016, p. 37) Therefore, that things can be different, argues Mazé, “raises political questions about what can, or should, change and what difference that makes.” (Mazé, 2016, p. 38)

¹⁰⁵ Incompleteness, according to Halse et al. (2010) does not refer to materially unfinished, below expectations or unsatisfactory designed things. Rather, it's the character of a work-in-progress that propels designing forward, affording an open, experimental and ludic space that is crucial for continuous engagement and participation (Halse et al., 2010, p.40). As the authors write, “Incompleteness ensures that the material is open for re-interpretation and re-configuration also by stakeholders with other competencies and concerns than ours” (Halse et al., 2010, p. 39).

or not precisely that (Kohn, 2013). In this sense, when somebody *else* appears in painting, the action is no longer *only* the product of a specific design process happening in the here and now, it has a history. It connects with past events and, thus, can become a producer of possible actions in the continuity. Even though imbued with the goal of implementing the 3D poster, the design event is open because it performs something else that is already experienced by the parents, who re-presented painting letters as another thing. In other words, while the spatial action retains its original significance, simultaneously, the experience becomes the emergence of an *almost* independent design event with its own context of design. How the parents regard their children painting the letters in the neighbourhood made clear how “design opportunities can emerge in the context in which they are to gain their meaningfulness.” (Halse et al., 2010, p. 15)

When somebody *else* appears to gather the letters, and take pictures, the designing process is re-situated in space and time as an anticipation and foresight of the 3D poster. The absence of a physical support becomes constitutive of another support to hold the letters. The work is no longer defined as a 3D poster for the entrance of the neighbourhood but the aestheticity of the sign “is manifested in its nature as event” as participants respond to what they perceive experiencing possible design “form-acts” of the 3D poster already then and there (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 162; Redström, 2013). If signs of the 3D poster emerge when the people behave “like” the iron structure and together with the letters they already perform the function of what may become at the entrance of the neighbourhood, then, what is the use of the 3D poster as a object? Having no structure was not merely a consequence of the delay of the municipality, the fact of a contingency, a problem, a need of something missing, the lack of conditions to achieve something. Instead, actions and actors did not need to be suspended, thus moved towards imagining and forming something new with and through this very absence and constraint on possibility. Gathering the letters to take pictures occurred in the same way as a possibility to look inwards and to experience what living as a community felt like through actions that did not compromise individual ethnicities and worlds (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 55).

In the two episodes “[t]he actor’s presence, the ecstasy of things, atmospheres, and the circulation of energy “occur” in the same way as the meanings brought forth as perceptions or the emotions, ideas, or thoughts resulting from them.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 162) The physical exposure, disposition to others, and dependency on others carried by design actions articulated potentials for changing the design process in its very execution. The space of tensions and compositions as an encounter between real bodies and real space suggested other possibilities and ways of inhabiting the future that were different than the process that was underway yet were already performed and inscribed in the same actions indicative

of different processes and projects. Considering the interference of the parents and the people as two opportunities to value or make meaningful the design process differently, which emerged from within not despite the design process itself, these moments were BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS. The encounter with the parents and the event of taking pictures flourished as indiscipline through the emergence of different design ends (opportunities, purposes, telos) and possible other endings of the designing process (material semiotic relations), right then and there, in happening of the life in the neighbourhood and in the middle a specific design situation. Through the binocular of indiscipline, the interferences were “projective abductions” carrying transformative potentials by expanding the landscape of possible material and semiotic configurations beyond preconceived design goals. In this sense, each time pocket was a BEGINNING. That is to say, an invitation to design with the neighbourhood, through the hopes, dreams, plans and projects of those who cared to join the spatial and experiential happening not by breaking what was being performed but by expanding it towards the world of ‘what if’ where there was room for completely different roles, responsibilities and articulations to take place.

3.3.3 Beginnings not ends

3.3.3.1 Different aesthetics of design

Seeing the 3D poster at the entrance of the neighbourhood, the situation appears constrained and limited by design's underlying norms and habitual politics. Instead of discipline, still, design performed as an indiscipline in the moments when the process and its product were no longer considered as one following the other (Gentes, 2017, p. 7). Instead both matched precisely the spatial interactions between absent and present participants and that was when design became constitutive of not one but many different processes, products, goals and motivations. Looking closer to the two pockets of time, through the binocular of indiscipline, "production" and "reception" were experienced at the same time instead of being considered separate practices assigned to specific participants (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 18). In those moments designing was as the practice of BEGINNINGS in contrast to all the other moments that determined the END.

Articulating properties of two poetic practices of design, "condensation and expansion" (Gentes, 2017, p. 131), while ENDS narrow down design to convergence BEGINNINGS turn design into a generative space. Focusing more specifically on the quality of interactions between participants throughout, a crucial difference between BEGINNINGS and ENDS lies precisely in the aestheticity of design itself as a social event tracing parallels with the two kinds of liminal experiences that oscillate in artistic performances: "aesthetic and non-aesthetic" moments (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 199).

Through the binocular, ENDS articulate confrontations and tensions between heterogeneous elements to produce a pre-conceived goal or achieve a consensual horizon. In Fischer-Lichte's sense, ENDS are non-aesthetic. Design is a process or journey that unfolds to reach a goal other than itself, therefore what goes on between participants in terms of confrontations and forms of interference concerns "the transition to something and the resulting transformation into this or that" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 199; *italics by the author*). That is to say, collective conception seeks utility. What drives the encounter between participants, composition and interplay between heterogeneous elements in an end moment is the "continuation of a disciplinary reasoning" (Gentes, 2017, p. 221), in the sense that to conceive consists in identifying and retaining what/who is instrumental while excluding what/who is useless to advance a teleological plan previously conceived. ENDS are mainly about deduction and induction, since designing is a process of convergence that carries along through what Gentes calls "condensation" (2017, p. 131).

While we don't agree with the author and instead argue that "condensation" as a

practice of conception seeks utility rather than meaning, — or utility as meaning that is not unexpected but associated with particular intentions, that drive the process through the probability or improbability of reaching closer or becoming distant to the goal or end — we do agree and understand, as well as the author, that condensation entails an inventive and expansive power, although one that occurs not in the condensing action itself but in the reception of a condensed form.

The episode with the parents is a good example when many possibilities encapsulated in a single object (the scene) trigger unexpected interpretations continuing the process of conception when it was being received or used aesthetically and experienced visually. Expansion occurred not by the mode of designing an END product but in turning the process into an END itself. The episode of taking pictures is another example showing how “condensation” was the pattern of the designing process when having an END brings forth the 3D poster in another materiality. The spontaneous activity of taking pictures projects new applications of the letters and possible materialisations of the END under different circumstances. Still expansion evidences the END that had been preconceived and can still be achieved. The expansive properties of an END, as Gentes argues:

“organize a whole world view which, on the one hand, narrows the interpretive options since it structures a precise view of the activity, but, on the other hand, offers a probable future with a great variety of details that all offer handles for memories (of other narratives, objects, situations) and projections of new applications and circumstances.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 131)

The expansion that occurs within an END moment, as what may appear to be the turning of ENDS into BEGINNINGS, is in reality the conventional form of design through the managerial and linear model (Gentes, 2017, p. 159). ENDS depart from an aesthetics of destabilization that is not concerned with the social event of design itself but follows the chronological material construct. Expansion is a non-aesthetic practice because it's the utility of tensions, the instrumentality of indiscipline and how the combination and deconstruction of disciplines, knowledges, bodies and things *rightfully* advance the appearance and presence of something already consensual among them or previously conceived by them, as what gives and sustains directionality and reason to the social design process. An END design practice is not precisely independent from the experienced world, it always somehow reduces reality to what exists.

In slight but crucial contrast, BEGINNINGS articulate abductive tensions between heterogeneous elements to expand the possibilities of design itself. Collective conception seeks meaning or purpose because it is free from any formal, social or technical determinism, rather is driven by conception itself. The focus of BEGINNINGS “is on the elements in presence, in the situation, where all the

actors living and nonliving are being composed to beget a new unknown.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 159) Therefore, they refer the spatial model of design by being “not only an idea put into a shape but a gradual building of an aesthetic that is material and ideological both and at the same time.” (Gentes, 2017, p. 159) In Fischer-Lichte’s sense, BEGINNINGS are aesthetic because design is a process or journey that is itself the goal, (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 199; italics by the author). What drives the encounter between participants and interplay between elements in a BEGINNING is the social encounter itself as the locus from where and when many kinds of compositions, directions and possibilities of transformation open up for and within the design process. BEGINNINGS entail design as a generative event that carries through “expansion” (Gentes, 2017, p. 131). The episode with the parents is a good example. What happens between the children and the letters experientially engenders an ordinary presence in the neighbourhood that is perceived by the parents as extraordinary. Design conception does not equate necessarily with inventing the new nor making the same displaced. Regard how the parents precisely avow the extraordinary, that is, for the ordinary to become conspicuous (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179). Proceeding from what is already there, they conceive many possible scenarios, at once related to and independent from the experienced world. This time pocket was a moment when no longer subordinated to expressivity or the appropriate or correct translation in material and semiotic terms of requirements, desires, or goals, the event of painting was “alive” in Kohn’s sense because the more immediate and authentic configuration of materials, functions, forms, technologies and bodies, could be something else and potentially change or be rearticulated towards other possible directions. Through the meanings and experiences generated by the parents, in a process of socialization, the event of painting letters became open-ended and detached from a pure reality, a true vision, and ceased to function for advancing a specific need or activity. Conception lies in the social encounter itself as a play that generates small but real consequential differences turning painting into an “expansive fiction” whose meaning and materiality articulated or assigned is transient and one possible option and configuration between elements that is already somehow challenged by another emergent one (Gentes, 2017, p. 235; Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The approximation of BEGINNINGS to ENDS occurs, still, due to the fact that “expansive fictions” do have real implications, immediate and authentic consequences, even bodily reflexes (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.140). As Gentes argues, expansion is a habitual form of anticipating ENDS in design as a spatial practice when representations of possible realities may “indirectly” conceive of what can be expected from an experience (Gentes, 2017, p. 230). Still, following from experiential lens, the word “indirectly” is fundamental. BEGINNINGS stage the possibility of transformation, yet transformation may or may not occur because at the moment

of “enchantment” transformation is only indirectly and partially real. Each specific configuration of materials and meaning that may emerge, may also dissolve or change in the next moment. BEGINNINGS are not precisely condensations rather “actualizations”¹⁰⁶ (Binder, 2016) of the generative process marking that anything, in reality, is possible. Taking pictures with the letters is a good example of how BEGINNINGS appear as elusive and transient ENDS, when diverse meanings and form-acts of coherence are being drawn and pushed together as possible potential condensations, or “integrative things” from within the reality of the design situation (Gentes, 2017, p. 230). Nevertheless, through ongoing role reversals, unexpected semiotic connections and unfolding new social relations, engaged participants within BEGINNINGS “perceive the world as enchanted” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 180). The way designing is performed and experienced as an expansion of temporal and spatial dimensions enables such “enchantment” understood as a profound apprehension of being in or between multiple modes, orders and possibilities at the same time (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 207). To be enchanted is to become conscious of a “threshold” or “liminal state” that, according to Fischer-Lichte, “lifts everyone slightly above the present” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.9). So as opposed to ENDS, BEGINNINGS as “thresholds” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008 p. 204) do not enclose but first and foremost connect.

3.3.3.2 Different design orientations

BEGINNINGS and ENDS frame different practices of design that can be seen as alternating aesthetic and non-aesthetic moments in the same process, like in artistic performances (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 200). From a spatial perspective, these can also refer the more particular moments of “design/practice” in production mode or “design/conception” in invention mode (Gentes, 2017, p. 7). Recalling the idea that to design a poster about the importance of creative activities in childhood is different than inviting children to paint letters in the neighbourhood, we can grasp how BEGINNINGS and ENDS shape different ethos of design.

When the structure arrived and the 3D poster was complete, there emerged a paradox. The letters now in *the right* place, performing the originally envisioned, planned and predicted END, suddenly appeared obsolete, making no sense nor triggering any desire for interaction. From “enchantment” with all its implications

¹⁰⁶ Encountering the possible, as Binder describes, “is this actualization of the movement of the present that is both exposed and held back as an experience of difference. It is not action as either a cause or an effect of networks, but a moment of becoming which, paradoxically, is at the same time both imagined and real.” (Binder, 2016, p. 278) These moments in design, for Binder, drawing from Richard Shechner, can be called “actuals” because they are both outcomes of real encounters and potential producers of further encounters “in which the subjunctive ‘what if’ touches upon the real. Actuals perform the possible as a potentiality that becomes almost tangibly present.” (Binder, 2016, p. 278)

of affective engagement, risk, excitement, exposure, and unpredictability, the design process moved to extreme dullness and ended in meaninglessness. This shift was caused not by the fact that the iron structure turned out to be too big and too high. Instead the meanings once recognised in proposing and setting off to make a 3D poster, were after all radically detached from the neighbourhood, when the outcome was perceived in reality as what it appeared: something external to the social life of the neighbourhood. To be clear, the *telos* of design — as the ultimate purpose or intentionality of the designing process — that had been configured initially by the designer consisted in a gesture — mediated through the 3D poster, as a product — that represented the neighbourhood to welcome (as opening up to) others to visit and join the celebration. This gesture appeared within the scope of the larger event that celebrated the memories and values of the Carnation Revolution, which specifically for the residents of 2 de Maio represented a time when they were united despite ethnic disputes. What if the anticipation of the 3D poster, as an experience of community, was a threshold that needed to be crossed even before connecting with the outside? What if the designing process was not about making or having a sign at the entrance of the neighbourhood, that assumed identity was pre-given, but instead, we would consider identity, opening up the question of ‘who we are’, as an end? What if the 3D poster could be in turn a “form-act” to design new relations, open up new directions, new issues and things to design for, with and by the people of 2 de Maio?

Standing at the entrance of the neighbourhood, observing the real 3D poster, laid bare how design holds a disciplining mechanism that enables its effortless efficacy as a non-aesthetic form. Despite all the live that spaced the appearance of other directions and things to project in the design process, having an END configured an unquestioned background that directed every design action and gesture to dismiss everything that design was not but could potentially be. In other words, mistaking the *telos* of the designing process for an object with unique technical, formal and functional qualities sets a clear and definite “horizon” — the term used by Feenberg (2010, p. 16) to refer “culturally general assumptions that form the unquestioned background to every aspect of life”— that emphasises every unexpected other in designing as noise, disturbance, not important or not relevant. From beginning to end, a formal and visual functionalization, and determinism, is established and in the name of the usefulness efficacy to achieve the “horizon”, the integrity of all that emerges within and beyond the designing process is discarded or taken for granted as natural contingencies or normal conflicts (Feenberg, 2010). The 3D poster at the entrance of the neighbourhood was a material and semiotic validation of this kind of bias within the design discipline (see also the chapter with the wall-newspaper). The 3D poster, as articulated by Fischer-Lichte, is “a “thing” whose “thingness” never vanishes. It exists as an artefact, which remains

consistent with itself regardless of the recipient's presence or even despite the changes that might occur over time." (2008, p. 160)

The orientation of an END recognises conception in design as a process that advances a teleological perspective. In other words, conceiving is not inventing, rather it consists in producing a pre-conceived goal or consensual horizon. The END is a moment in which tensions and composition retains in design what/who is instrumental for design. Who and what makes this selection possible is evidently debatable, although, it is more effective and efficient for an END if actions conform participants to their roles and disciplines, therefore, questioning and debate are not precisely the function of design actions but rather emerge as tensions when the END is at stake. For example, having an END prevents the children from becoming users, while it affirms their role as producers in the design situation. This orientation makes the participation of children instrumental for creating something external to the event of their participation, which is different than to consider the social encounter itself as the design process which accomplishes exactly what it performs (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 140). There is a difference between a process oriented by a goal that is external to the event that brings it to being. Therefore, expected or not, the same "horizon" that directed design also produced a de-familiarization with itself when it became achieved as static and fixed form. The two unexpected episodes that emerged in designing the 3D poster, performed such an approximation between design and life that any design outcome of the situation could no longer be seen as an END located outside the designing process, similar to something in the mind waiting to become real or a concrete result of goal-oriented actions that progress in a linear *disciplined* way. Opening up the designing process to an expanded social and temporal field of possibilities, BEGINNINGS were a possible threshold and transition to different social directions and decisions beyond a single preconceived goal. A BEGINNING is the experience of an expansion of design in the encounter with others, acting as the "liminal moments" which came to introduce a state of "unpredictability" wherein participants could no longer clearly foresee which things may become real nor to which ends. Yet, simultaneously, it was precisely the inner uncertainty and indeterminacy, or under-determination, of design as a whole, that opened up different forms of coherence while expanding designerly agency in unexpected and inventive ways (Gentes, 2017, p. 220). Each time, the appearance of *somebody else* revealed the partiality of design. The purposes, telos and intentions of designing were only partial until the parents began to articulate a whole range of different concerns and interests at play, that gradually solidified the scene as an actual design space in the fullness of its activity. Whether painting letters was an action to produce a 3D poster, or an event to teach children to read through play, depends on 'who' is looking, hence, who is *engaged in* designing. Each time pocket constituted

moments of the designing process, wherein design did not equate with the course of producing a pre-conceived END, rather it performed indiscipline or an expansion of design's possibilities, hence a BEGGINING. Without absolute foundation or goal, BEGGININGS were characterized by a bringing together in tension and in composition all the agencies involved in corporality, relationality, spatiality and temporality. In this sense, the experience was a push for the inventiveness of design rather than the end of designing. Design was an aspect of everything that the parents and the people did, insofar as their actions were guided by hopes, dreams and promises "actualised" in their encounter with design. Rather than to judge or evaluate from an outsiders' position, they sought to correspond with what was happening in the present not by representing it but by doing something with its "form" seeing it as an open "form-act" for different things.

Regarding the parents or the people's interferences as indiscipline, there were no attempts on their part to end designing or force the situation into molds of their own individual agendas. In fact, many agendas, goals and expectations were scattered in interaction with what was already then and there. By the ways in which a real scenario of painting letters or real presence of the 3D poster were both being socially performed and experienced in the same act, instead of converging design to an END, the people of 2 de Maio amplified the many opportunities and possibilities of the design process being and becoming another thing. Dramatizing the actions in their spatial and experiential implications, they turned an ordinary design process into an extraordinary event temporarily. Occurring as a diffraction, indiscipline was the confrontation and gathering on the same plateaux of design rigour and relevance: what things are, what things are not, what things can be, what things can be not. There was no "either or" logic but an "as well as" logic of conception that recognised equal priority, responsibility and agency in different participants, actions and phenomena (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 204). The encounter was a BEGINNING wherein the design process became fundamentally indeterminate and everything became fundamentally debatable. Multiple trajectories were open to be taken by design, whether because of the intrinsic performative qualities in each social design happening, whether through the interference of somebody else. In this sense, as a matter of politics, designing as a "form-act" became a matter of orientation. It depended on who was looking, and what the shifting ecology saw or did not see in the happening and what it experienced or perceived as possibilities or constraints. When the letters turn into the expected 3D poster, they emerged "inanimate" and radically detached from the life of the neighbourhood. This END forced us to look backwards, as Kohn argues, to "the telos, the significance, the means-ends relations—in short, the mean-ings, as I call them, to highlight the close relationship between means and meanings" (Kohn, 2013, p. 90).

Looking back, we could see the BEGINNINGS as moments of re-enchantment. how different and multiple ends were flourishing as a constitutive feature of designing as a social process, because it depended on who was looking there were diffracted ways in which designing could unfold and possibly end. By revealing design in its ability to destabilize the design space and expand the sphere of possibilities from within occurring design situations, why we advocate for the BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS. BEGINNINGS were the moments when design became an indiscipline. They presented the gaps or the opportunities to rethink *where we are going* and *what does really matter*. They were the indiscipline to unfold design as a practice that is not engaged in transforming the world rather it is part of the world transforming itself.¹⁰⁷

3.3.3.3 Indiscipline as destabilization and expansion

Engaged in the process of designing an END – the 3D poster – the two events marked by the appearance of unexpected others were two cases of indiscipline that performed a temporary failure to play along with the pattern of design. In this case, we come to experience two kinds of indiscipline. Indiscipline as a destabilization, and indiscipline as an expansion.

Destabilization means the coming together between different elements or different disciplines is a design situation. Through the binocular of indiscipline, to design is to destabilize because design is the event of a social tension or encounter between disparate things, be them different bodies, the people and the researchers, or different things, the paper and the chopsticks. The appearance of the parents or the people were such a destabilizing encounter. Their presence made conspicuous the non-aesthetic orientation of the design process to achieve a specific goal or END, so their actions in relation to the events and the protagonists of such events revealed the structures that render design exposed in its artificiality as a kind of play. Indiscipline was a destabilization because it transferred the events into a state of undisciplined suspension without offering any guidelines for reorientation. Although, the perception of being caught in some configuration of the present did not exactly freeze design performance. DESIGN WAS *STILL* THE SITUATION enveloping all participants because material and semiotic conception continued through the parents and the people. Instead of destabilizing the spatial construct, what became suspended was the single/exclusive orientation of design as a condensation. Moving to expansion, indiscipline became a liminal space where the present roles, things, events, directions, purposes and future became revealed, hence open to be potentially transformed. Destabilization emerged as the

107 (Gatt and Ingold, 2013, p. 146)

design event affording the possibilities for rethinking or transforming things and making new unprecedented connections. The logics of destabilization articulated by the parents or the people performed a confrontation of design with itself, as an indiscipline of the discipline's indiscipline. Their sudden appearance as co-designers generated an aperture that enabled participants to guess what may come next, by making visible the present rules and norms of the design situation (destabilizing the design discipline), but also the possibly different directions and outcomes already at play (expanding the design discipline).

BEGINNINGS demonstrate that without the need for specifying END points, the bearings of 'how' and 'what' to design can be determined and re-articulated by others in the moments and in the happenings of that living encounter with others. design as an indiscipline in confrontation with itself. BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS is an argument to recognise how socialization is the foundation of design's generativity. When design became social, practiced from the perspective of the people of 2 de Maio, owned momentarily by them, it could lift its own ordinary habits, norms and rules in suspension to capture other possible extraordinary directions from the inside. Expanding meanings and materiality, purposes, and ends that may or may not unfold but that are already allowed in and inside the situation, does not mean everything is included in or as design, but that what is significant, valuable and relevant precisely depends on who is looking, hence who engaged in designing. In this sense, BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS is an argument for producing a slight yet crucial inclination in our conventional politics of design: from designing *in* the world to designing *with* the world.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ To produce a slight but crucial inclination "from designing on the world to designing in the world" (Thackara 2005, p. 214)

Case Summary

Beginnings not ends

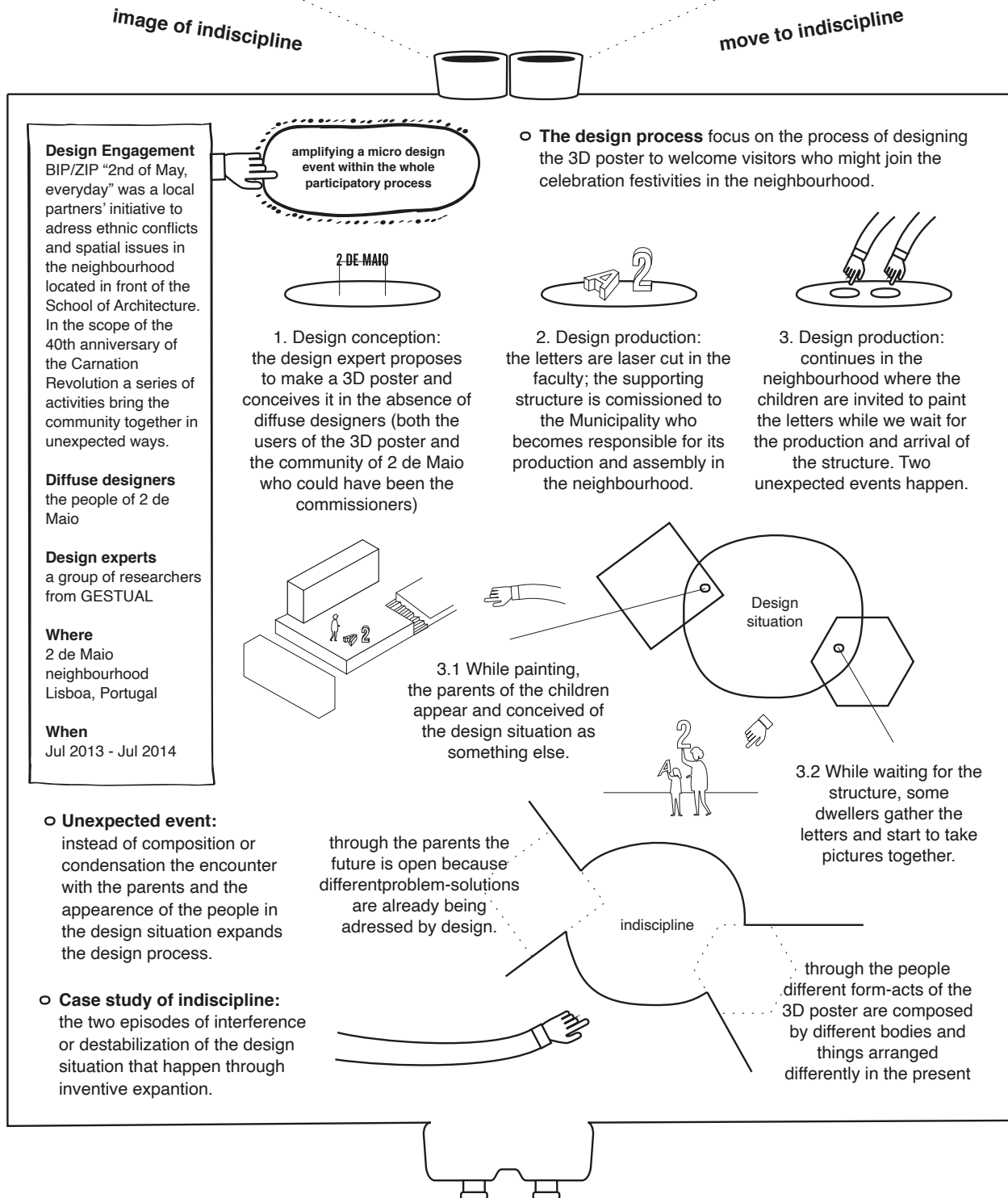


Diagram 10. Case summary through the binocular of indiscipline.



3.4

Design is a living thing

**3.4.1 A garden made of gardens: a journey
through pictures**

**3.4.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline: the
trees, the contract and the identity tags**

3.4.3 Design is a living thing



3.4.1 A garden made of gardens: a journey through pictures

This case is a collaboration with the visual artist Sofia Borges in the artistic project ‘Vitória Gardens Collection: Trees and Plants from Quinta da Vitória Neighbourhood’¹⁰⁹ between January and June 2015 to design the identification plates for the trees and the garden and a graphic language to communicate the work of art.

The project is an archive and public garden constituted by the botanical species that belonged to dwellers of Quinta da Vitória, a neighbourhood located on the border of Lisbon, that was subject to a rehousing programme and demolition process, from 1993 that was complete in 2014. Regarded as “conquered territory”¹¹⁰ that reversed the eviction and destruction processes that would otherwise result in the complete disappearance of the Quinta da Vitoria community, the collection of trees and plants is a living memory and repository of different cultural practices, and a place where former residents of Quinta da Vitoria neighbourhood and local communities nearby meet.

Located in the city of Loures, next to the Lisbon International Airport and within the Portela de Sacavém district, Quinta da Vitória neighbourhood was a self-produced settlement comparable to what is perceived as a shantytown. From the arrival of the first Portuguese families in the 1960s, there was an increase in dwellings and population in the area until mid-1970s due to the arrival of Portuguese emigrants and African immigrants following the decolonization processes in Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and S. Tome and Prince. In the 1980s, with the arrival of Indian families from Diu and also from Mozambique due to the civil war, Quinta da Vitória reached 5000 inhabitants. The strong presence of

109 Original title in Portuguese: ‘Coleção Jardins da Vitória: Árvores e plantas provenientes do Bairro da Quinta da Vitória’. Design and Coordination: Sofia Borges. Residents of the Quinta da Vitória neighborhood: Rajnicant Sauchande Daia, Nalini Bai Carsane, Ajit Dangi, Benvindo Moreira, Jaisinh Calanchande, Pedro Calanchande, Amarchande Otomchande, Puspavantibai Valgi, Manuel Vaz, Ana Moreno dos Santos, Sucilabai Ramgi, Ramila Carsane, Puruisha Manoja, Mohanlal Premgi, Usha Govind Harji Nathoo, among others. Graphic Design: Inês Veiga. Urban Equipment: Inês Veiga, Sofia Borges and Oficina do Castelo. Collaboration: Joana Pestana and Joana Braga. Revision: Rui Palmeiro. Scientific Review: Luís Mendonça de Carvalho, Mariana Clerk and Apurv Jani (Shiv Mandir-Hindu Temple). Media support: Jornal MP - Moscavide e Portela; Artecapiatal.net. Institutional Support: Ambé Jay Mandir; Shiv Mandir; BAPS Community Shri Swaminarayan Mandir; Hindu Community of Portugal. Logistic support: Recer S.A.; Saint-Gobain-Weber Portugal S.A. Local support: Rotary Club of Portela; Cafés Portela; Pharmacy Paula de Campos; Casa Piri-Piri (C.C. Portela). Digital platform: 2015-2016 Editorial coordination: Sofia Borges Design: Inês Veiga Web development: João Martins. From 2016: Editorial coordination: Sofia Borges and Roger Meintjes. Graphic Design: Arne Kaiser. Web Platform Development: IN [RE] ACTION. Text: Sofia Borges. Photography: Sofia Borges and Arne Kaiser. Partner: Obra Aberta, Africa Cont. For more information: <http://www.jardinsdavitoria.pt/en>

110 Borges, S., 2016: <http://www.jardinsdavitoria.pt/en/project/>



this community led to the construction of the first Hindu temple in Portugal, Jai Ambe Mandir, in 1983, on the main street of Quinta da Vitória and over the years the sense, described by anthropologist Rita Cachado, of “a Gujarati village appearance: the same colours, the same typology (especially interiors), the same language, and the same rituals.” (Cachado, 2008, p. 41).

In 1993, Quinta da Vitória was admitted to the PER — the Especial Rehousing Programme which followed the directives of a national programme set up to eradicate poverty on the lines of reintegrating communities that were ‘prone to criminal activities, prostitution and drug addiction.’¹¹¹ The implication of this programme was a consequential demolition process that in the case of Quinta da Vitória lasted for nineteen years, from 1995 to 2014.

Disturbed by the public discourse about Quinta da Vitória and the discriminatory post-colonial looks upon similar neighbourhoods around Greater Lisbon, in 2006, a group of artists, art curators and anthropologists set off to engage with the community. Notwithstanding the ongoing rehousing and demolition process, the group began to document quotidian practices and spatial relational dynamics as ways to produce different, and more real, social and cultural representations of the neighbourhood. ‘The Party is Over’, or originally ‘A Festa Acabou’, became the name of the project, when one resident used the expression to refer to the neighbourhood’s life after the onset of its disappearance.

The durational interaction between the dwellers and the group, that lasted until 2009, generated the appearance of different kinds of matter and knowledge through which different aspects of the life in Quinta da Vitória were preserved.

One example was the collection of stories and performances around gardening, recognizing the crucial importance of plants and trees to a great majority of people in the neighbourhood. For almost 40 years, botanical species native of Africa and Asia were planted and became part of the everyday life in Quinta da Vitória as means of economic subsistence, to be used in cooking and therapeutic practices, to participate in religious ritual, and to maintain other symbolic and affective connections with distant memories, habits and traditions of the lives and the places where people originally came from.

Even though the artistic project had come to an end, the visual artist Sofia Borges continued to document the stories of life of the people in Quinta da Vitória who had not yet been rehoused. Returning to the neighbourhood – without funding or any external institutional support, it’s important to note – to identify the botanical

111 As Braga, Pestana and Veiga (2017, p. 178) argue: “PER followed PNLC, a national programme set up to fight poverty and launched in 1991, which ostensibly implied social action in order to integrate excluded communities that were ‘prone to criminal activities, prostitution and drug addiction.’ Guided by words such as ‘eradication’ and ‘full extinction,’ PER generated a prejudgment about the life and sociocultural conditions of ‘bairros de lata’ dwellers, suggesting a linear association between inadequate housing conditions and the existence of social problems.”

Figure 67 Quinta da Vitória neighbourhood, 2006. © Sofia Borges

Figure 68 Affective cartography map made with children. “Everything we don’t know about other places we know about this one” poster series in the project ‘The Party is Over’. 2009 © Sofia Borges

Figure 69 The sugarcane in Quinta da Vitória, according to the artist, was a means of economic subsistence especially for the Cape Verdean families who extensively planted it to produce and sell molasses, cane brandy and other by-products. 2013 © Sofia Borges



species, she began to notice how some of the trees and plants became conspicuous, in the absence of their owners, within the landscape of destruction.

In 2012, approaching the last phase of the demolition process, Sofia began to collect living samples of the most significant trees and plants that were remaining. The purpose was to build an archive of the botanical species present in Quinta da Vitória, namely the 'Vitória Gardens Collection: Trees and Plants from Quinta da Vitória Neighbourhood'. The intention of safeguarding the disappearance of the species led to the recognition of a common interest among the remaining residents to donate their trees and plants in the view of the possibility of building a garden. Following the thought that the trees and plants were not only symbolic of the different lives that once existed in one place, they could also become representations through which Quinta da Vitória could specifically continue to exist, Sofia set off the process of making a new garden made of gardens. Engaging former and remaining residents of Quinta da Vitória, 50 botanical species – originally from Mozambique, Kenya, Cape Verde, Portugal, Angola, Guinea Bissau, and S. Tome and Prince – were catalogued and selected to feature a garden that would emerge in place of the neighbourhood. The first concepts designed by the artist together with the residents were based on maintaining the trees and plants in their original places while drawing paths on the ground to join them together.

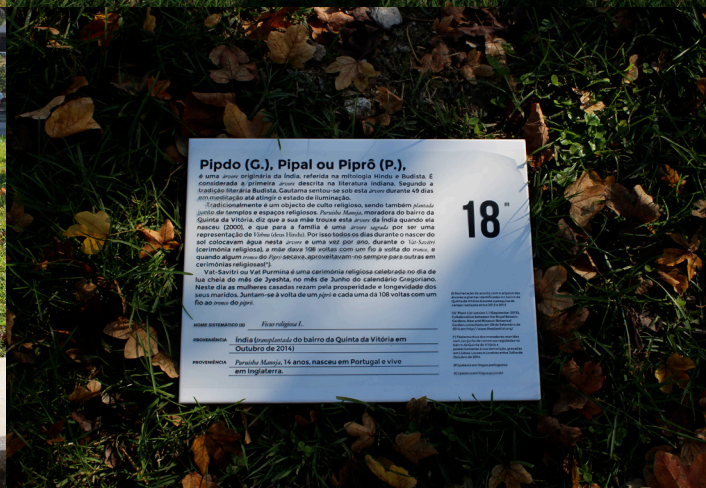
Making the proposal to the Portela district Ward, however, the lack of jurisdiction and diffuse information about who legally owns the land became an obstacle. Still, the Ward was open to the possibility of supporting the materialization of the collection in another place. In the 'Almeida Garret Garden', one of the main parks in the area, located next the shopping mall and attracting a lot of people living nearby, there was a free space where the trees and the plants could be transplanted. Recognizing that the project could still retain its symbolic power in another place, the artist and the community went on board. While the demolition machines operated, other machines arrived in Quinta da Vitória to carefully remove and transport the trees.

During this process, only 20 species arrived in the new place properly. Some of the others remained in Quinta da Vitória, namely the bigger trees whose roots were already too deep to be lifted without damage, while others moved to the municipality's gardening facilities and plant nursery.

Moving to an existing garden, however, implied that some kind of identity tag for each tree and plant should be made. The testimonials and stories of the specific uses, rituals and practices of the owners were the crucial matter that could make the presence and appearance of each tree and plant unique, otherwise they would not be recognized as part of the 'Vitória Gardens Collection'. Beyond captions, therefore, the identity tags were means through which more specifically the cultural practices associated with the mixture of different geographies could be preserved, and potentially reproduced.

Figure 70 Trees standing on their own. The Banana Tree, the Java plum and the sugarcane from "Gardens of Paradise" by Sofia Borges. Collecting the plants: colocasia or elephant-ear is a plant whose leaves are used to make a traditional Indian dish called 'Patra'. The owner of the Java plum tree witnessing it being transplanted. Transplanting the banana tree. © Sofia Borges





Pipdo (G.), Pipal ou Pipró (P.),

é uma árvore originária da Índia, presente na mitologia hindu e budista. É considerada a primeira árvore descrita na literatura indiana. Segundo a tradição hindu da Bhakti, Garudha, o veado, vive nesta árvore durante 40 dias em meditação até atingir o estado de iluminação.

Tradicionalmente é um símbolo de culto religioso, sendo também plantada junto de templos e espaços religiosos. *Pipal* Manjé, moradora do bairro da Quinta da Vitória, diz que a sua mãe trouxe esta árvore da Índia quando ela nasceu (2000), e que para a família é uma árvore especial, por ser uma representação da Índia para ela. Por isso todos os dias durante o ano do colóquio a sua mãe e ela vão visitar a árvore e colocam água nesta árvore e uma vez por ano, durante o 10.º aniversário religioso, a mãe dá-lhe 100 voltas com um fio de ouro e, quando algum filho não for secular, acrescentam-no sempre para outras em "100 voltas religiosas".

Vol. 100 voltas é uma cerimónia religiosa celebrada no dia da sua chloa da mãe de *Yashita*, no mês de Junho do calendário Gregoriano. Neste dia as mulheres casadas recolhem pelo propriedade e longevidade dos seus maridos. Juntam-se à volta de um *pipal* e cada uma dá 100 voltas com um fio ao *pipal* de *Yashita*.

NOME BOTÂNICO: *Ficus religiosa* L.

PROTECTOR: Índia (Imperador do bairro da Quinta da Vitória em Outubro de 2011)

PROTECTOR: *Pipal* Manjé, 14 anos, nasceu em Portugal e vive em Inglaterra.

To design the identity tags, the artist invited a graphic designer to collaborate. Setting off with a visual research, we looked into examples and references of scientific botanical archives, artistic archives and general ways of labelling series of things. The intention to make the descriptions look comparable to scientific texts, became an important aspect to emphasise that the tacit knowledge produced through the practice of everyday life is as valuable as that which is produced within established institutional orders. Visually speaking, we decided to compose the identity tags only with typography and install them next to the trees and plants, to highlight the experience of being within an actual botanical garden or moving within an archive made of living things.

As we explored different ways of setting typography and composing the information, the aim was to contrast and combine the dichotomies of tacit and scientific knowledge, static and living things, memories of the past and presences in the here and now that propagate into the future. The result was the main use of Montserrat,¹¹² a geometric sans serif font, always set in bold composed with the sudden appearance of specific words always set in Hoefler Text¹¹³ an classic modern serif font, in italic style. These words were the scientific and the colloquial names of the specific botanical species, the names of the owners and all the words related with gardening, namely, 'tree', 'plant', 'sacred tree', 'stem', 'leaf', 'root' and so on.

In scientific botanical archives, each botanical species is identified with a series number which is often highlighted or separated from the descriptive information. It is the number generated in the labelling process and often used as the key to navigate the archive, to research and be able to find the specific tree or plant one is looking for. The number used in the identity tags of the 'Vitória Gardens Collection' is the one attributed by the artist as the trees and plants in Quinta da Vitória were catalogued in parallel to the collection of the life stories of their owners. To emphasise the character of an assemble of things or sample of something, we decided to set these numbers in a bigger size than the rest of the information present in the tag, to function as well as an eye-catching element.

In parallel to the visual content of the identity tags, we were also exploring how to install, hence materialize, them in the garden.

Looking into examples and references of signage designed for and used in gardens, parks and botanical museums, we met a few times also with the Portela Ward, the ward gardeners and the Hindu Community to understand their perspective about what would be realistically viable and possible to do in the Garret Garden,

¹¹² Montserrat is a typeface family designed by Julieta Ulanovsky at Adobe Fonts for Google fonts. The font is inspired by the old posters and signs in the traditional Montserrat neighborhood of Buenos Aires. See: <https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Montserrat>

¹¹³ Hoefler is a typeface family designed in 1991 by the Jonathan Hoefler company adopted by Apple Inc.

Figure 71 (p. 244) Transplanting the botanical species from Quinta da Vitória to the Almeida Garret Garden. The Peepal tree is a sacred tree to the Hindu Community wherein they perform worship rituals. Transplanting the peepal tree. The ward gardeners transplanting the Java plum tree. © Sofia Borges

moreover, in relation to the trees and plants in the space, so that the installation would not put into risk the survival of the species, nor the identity tag eventually compromise the religious rituals the Hindu Community intended to perform with the sacred trees, in particular the Peepal tree.

Meanwhile discussing materials and techniques and negotiating possible minor transformations of the existing garden to accommodate the identity tags as well as the possibility of having a sign to identify the whole collection, there were some difficulties emerging with the arrival of the trees.

Living in the buildings adjacent to the Garret Garden, several people were filing complaints about the location of some trees that had been put right in the middle of the areas they regularly used to make picnics, play with children or do sport activities. Besides, the residents walking dogs in the Garret Garden were allowing them to pee on to the trees of the collection. As a consequence, one of the banana trees had died, bringing forth the concern for the other trees and plants, especially the sacred trees of the Hindu Community which were not only difficult to replace, they would take years to grow to a size proper for worship rituals. Reaching this point of uncertainty about the project, Sofia donated the 'Vitória Gardens Collection' to the Portela Ward. Beyond an artistic matter, the garden required proper and full-time care of the trees and plants, and beyond her control, the issues and questions raised by the citizens concerned decisions, in regard to the presence and future of the collection, that could only be made by a public authority. Therefore, a contract made by the artist, officially entrusted the collection to the Ward, who became responsible for its complete implementation, maintenance and future continuity. Once the document was signed, the garden became a reality. The Portela Ward reached out to the residents living in the quarter next to the Garret Garden to inform that the trees were part of an artistic project whose implementation was not in question and would be complete. Nevertheless, they were open to negotiate, bringing in the artist to participate as well, a better location for the trees and plants that would serve all stakeholders.

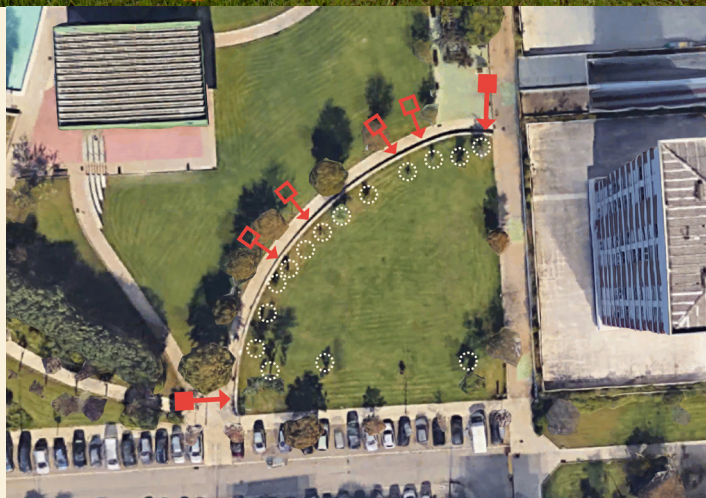
After some intense collective discussions, the trees and plants within the space that had been assigned for the collection, were reorganized to occupy only its margins. Distributed around the edges of the quarter of a circle some of the trees and plants were replanted. In this way, the citizens maintained their habitual activities, while agreeing to be vigilant about their dogs which had proper places in the Garret Garden to be walked. Changing of the location of the trees, actually influenced the decisions about the identity tags. From the tests with different materials, we arrived at the conclusion that printing the visual contents in ceramic plates was the most appealing and cost-effective solution for both immediate implementation and maintenance. Collaborating with a ceramic workshop, which became partner of the garden, it would be easy to replace any singled damaged identity tag, at any time, or replace all of them at once eventually in time for a symbolic cost.

Figure 72 (p. 245) The area within the Almeida Garret Garden assigned for the Collection was the quarter of a circle, which was precisely the area citizens reclaim to be their place for making picnics and sport activities. The Peepal tree in the new garden © Joana Braga. The loquat tree in the new place. Experimenting different typographic compositions, materials and places to put the identity tags near the trees © Inês Veiga



STATEMENT

Sofia Borges, author and coordinator of the project “Victória Gardens Collection” donates this project to the District Office of Portela and Moscavide. This donation is made to **assure that the Office of Portela and Moscavide takes charge** of completing the transplant of all botanical species, their respective identification as well as of the garden, and continuo to maintain and manage its **continuity and care** in conformity terms with the “Victória Gardens Collection”.





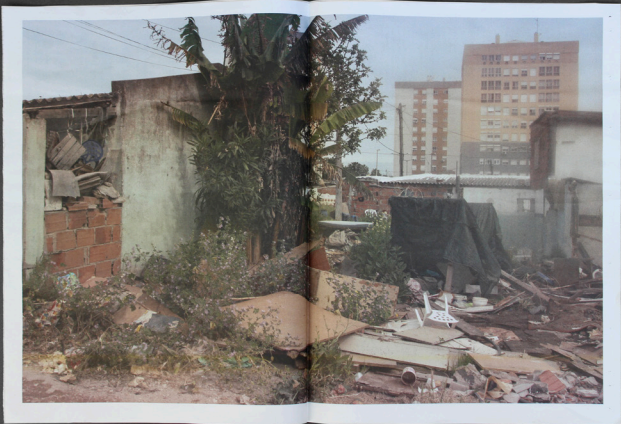
Coming back to discuss with the Portela Ward, the ward gardeners and the Hindu Community where to place the plates, the decision was to install them on the bench around the space of the garden. The plates would have a very small height so that people could still sit on top or on the side, and in this way, each identity tag would be placed in front of its respective tree. The only issue was with the trees which were located on the rectangular margins of the garden, where the sidewalk was too far away. Furthermore, the possibility of digging holes or making foundations on the ground to install only three ceramic plates had a high cost in terms of resources, time and money for the Ward and the gardeners.

In conclusion, we agreed to place these three plates also on the bench, creating small infographics to indicate which tree the plate corresponded to. Turning the bench into the main carrier of the identity tags, it became coherent to design the sign of the 'Vitória Gardens Collection' as another ceramic plate to be installed on the bench. The logic was that all the plates would have the same size. Still, the identity tags of the trees and plants were setup horizontally, while the sign of the collection was layout vertically. Placed one at each tip of the bench, we opted to for a bigger than the identity tags so that the signs of the collection could to stand out more clearly from the bench.


Figure 73 Meeting between the artist, the Ward, the ward gardeners, the Hindu Community and other partners in the new garden. The contract to donate the Vitória Gardens Collection to the Portela de Sacavém Ward © Sofia Borges. Infographics to identify which tree the ceramic plate belongs to. © Design: Inês Veiga. The bench where the identity tags were placed. At each tip, there is one plate which signals the entire 'Vitória Gardens collection'.



Colecção Jardins da Vitória
*Árvores e plantas provenientes
do bairro da Quinta da Vitória*
por Sofia Borges



Este *jardim* — feito de *jardins* — mostra a realidade vivida pelos moradores do Bairro da Quinta da Vitória, que ao longo dos anos reproduziram as suas necessidades, afectos e conhecimentos no *cultivo* de diferentes espécies *botânicas*, provenientes de Portugal, Angola, Moçambique, Índia, Quênia, Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau e São Tomé e Príncipe, presentes nesta colecção.



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Perceitos Institucionais: JUNTA DE FREGUESIA DE MOSCÁVIDE E PORTELA, E CÁMARA MUNICIPAL DE LOURES Apêlice FUNDADO CALOUSTE OSBENIAN / FICER, S.A. / SANTI-GORAN WEBER PORTUGAL, S.A. / OFICINA DO CASTELO Apêlice Institucionais AMBÉ JAY MANDIR / SANTI MANDIR / COMUNITARIAS BARRIO SAN FERNANDO Apêlice HINDU DE PORTUGAL Apêlice LOCAL ROTARY CLUB DE PORTELA / CAFES PORTELA / FARMACIA PAULA DE CAMPOS / CASA PIRI-PIRI (C.C. PORTELA) Obra de Arte Local JORNAL MOSCÁVIDE PORTELA.

info@jardinsdavitoria.com
www.jardinsdavitoria.com

38°46'53.6"N 9°08'32.6"W
Portela (Lousal)

Once all the trees and plants were set up in place, and the parameters to design the identity tags were settled, the group decided on a date for the opening ceremony of the garden made of made of gardens. The aim of the event was to mark the completion of the 'Vitória Gardens Collection' and make a public recognition of its existence as a public garden, open for all different worlds and worldviews.

Starting the arrangements, the artist and the designer set off to design the invitations for the event and communication materials of the collection. At that time, with no funding, there was still the collaboration with the Ward with whom we negotiated possibilities of using their means of communication to spread the word about across the neighbourhoods and quarters nearby. The Ward, and specifically the division which is responsible for designing and editing the local newsletter, offered an 8-page booklet to be distributed before the event, along with the newsletter, via mailbox, and also a sum to be present in the garden on the day of the opening ceremony.

The visual appearance of newspapers, hence using the same kind of paper, became interesting to us in the way it was able to convey a sense of accessing news which are not normally seen or outspoken, for instance, the disappearance of a neighbourhood and its reappearance as a garden. So, the catalogue was not a conventional exhibition catalogue wherein all the trees and plants would be presented as the pieces of an art collection. Nor it was meant to be a reproduction of the plant archive, with all the descriptions present on the identity tags. Instead we thought of the catalogue as a trigger for curiosity and reflection, and an invitation to come and enjoy the garden. In this view, Sofia wrote a short text as an introduction to the project while one of the anthropologists of the previous project 'A Festa Acabou' and the researchers, who had worked with the artist and the designer in other neighbourhoods around Greater Lisbon, were invited to write small essays about the Quinta da Vitória neighbourhood and the 'Vitória Gardens Collection' as a socially engaged process and intervention for and with a vulnerable community. Selecting only three pictures which were considered by the artist the most remarkable, we highlighted also some of her claims from the short text, with the purpose of turning each printed double page into a possible poster. While the catalogues printing, the print house made a special price for printing postcards of the project which we thought of as identity cards of the 'Vitória Gardens Collection' that could be useful after the opening ceremony event.

All along, Sofia had wanted the archive to become a digital platform. The aim was to be able to show all the trees and plants, – the non-transplanted species, those which had been selected prior to transplanting although something happened to them in the process, and those which had effectively appeared in the new garden – and their original locations in Quinta da Vitória. This is possible today, in the new website that was made since after the opening ceremony when the artist was

Figure 74 Graphic identity of the project and original title in Portuguese: 'Colecção Jardins da Vitória: Árvores e plantas provenientes do Bairro da Quinta da Vitória'. The centre page of the catalogue features the main picture that was chosen to identify the 'Vitória Gardens Collection'. The double pages of the catalogue could be used as posters. The postcards. © Design: Inês Veiga

Colecção Jardins da Vitória
Árvores e plantas provenientes do bairro
da Vitória
Por Sofia Borges

Reúne-se uma colecção de 20 espécies botânicas (*), seleccionadas de um conjunto de 50 exemplares, cedidas pelos moradores do bairro da Quinta da Vitória.

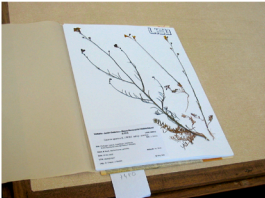
Os exemplares presentes neste jardim permitem a preservação da memória cultural deste bairro e dos seus moradores, que ao longo de anos foram reproduzindo as suas necessidades e conhecimentos através do cultivo de diferentes espécies botânicas, provenientes de Portugal, Angola, Moçambique, Índia, Quênia, Cabo Verde, Guiné e São Tomé. A maioria oriunda dos países de origem dos moradores, que chegaram a Portugal a partir dos anos 70, no período que procedeu à descolonização destes países. Alguns dos exemplares transplantados, como a *árvore sagrada* (*Ficus religiosa* L.) e outras plantas identificadas nas placas de inscrição desta colecção, continuam a ser usadas na prática religiosa pelos moradores e comunidade hindu residente.

A Colecção Jardins da Vitória é realizada no âmbito alargado de um trabalho de pesquisa e criação artística desenvolvido desde 2006 em estreita colaboração com os moradores até a demolição do bairro da Quinta da Vitória em 2014.

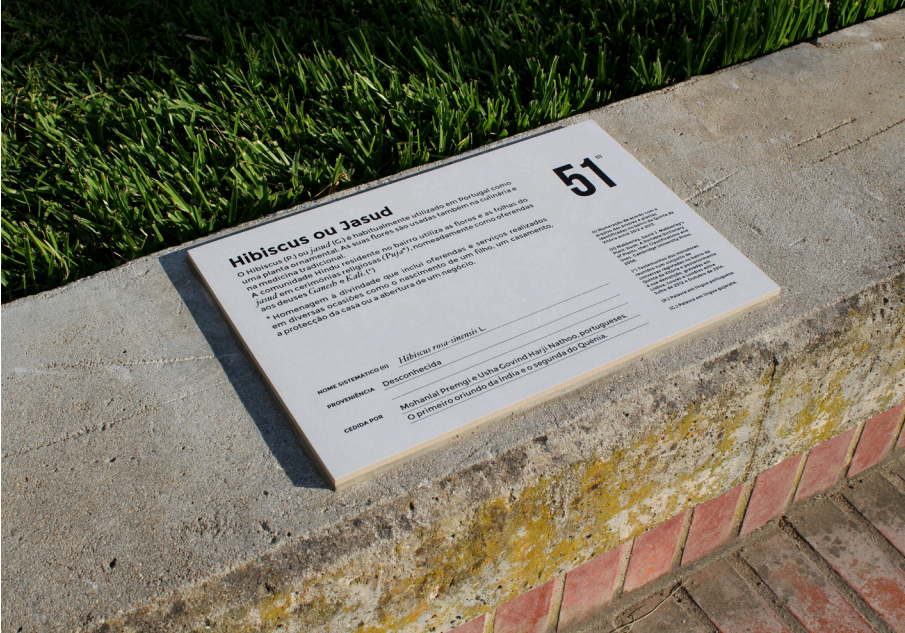
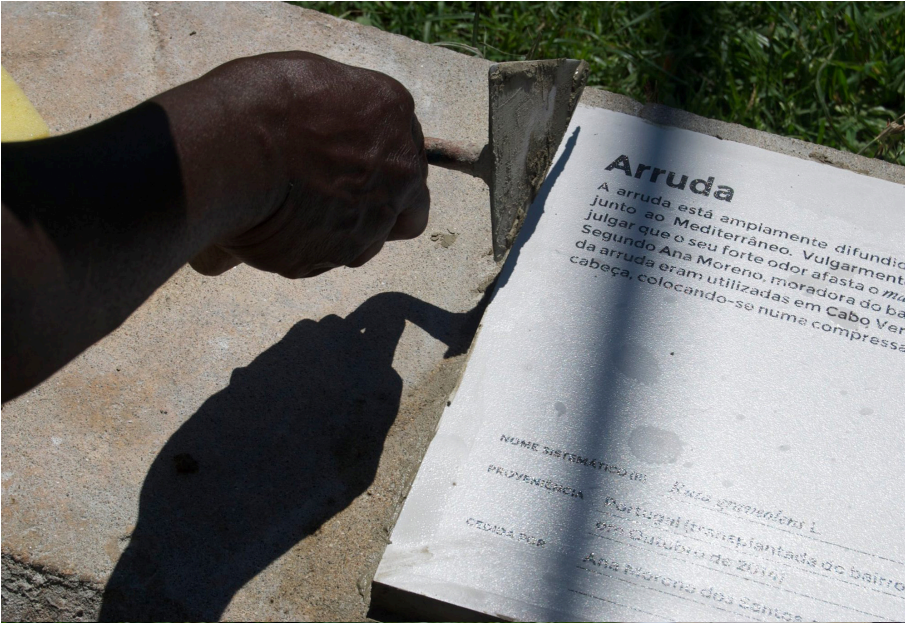
[Ver mais](#)



(*) Espécies botânicas presentes na Colecção Jardins da Vitória: N° 20 Piprô (*Ficus religiosa* L.); N° 45 Abacateiro (*Persa Americana* Mill.); N° 6 Jamelão (*Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels); N°1 Nespereira (*Eriobotrya japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl.); N° 39 Patra (*Colocasia esculenta* (L.) Schott); N° 37 Cacto (*Opuntia ficus-indica* (L.) Mill.; N° 3 e N° 4 Cana-do-açúcar (*Saccharum officinarum* L.); N° 16 Anoneira (*Annona cherimola* Mill.); N° 25 Loureiro (*Laurus nobilis* L.); N° 30 Erva-príncipe (*Cymbopogon citratus* (DC.) Stapf); N° 43 Alecrim (*Rosmarinus officinalis* L.); N° 41 Arruda (*Ruta graveolens* L.); N° 48 Figueira (*Ficus carica* L.); N° 23 Cana-do-açúcar (*Saccharum officinarum* L.); N° 21 Piprô (*Ficus religiosa* L.); N° 8 Mangueira (*Mangifera indica* L.); N° 51 Hibiscus (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L.); N° 18 Piprô (*Ficus religiosa* L.); N° 22 Bananeira (*Musa paradisiaca* L.) e N° 7b Oleandro (*Nerium oleander* L.).



N° 20 Piprô	N° 45 Abacateiro	N° 6 Jamelão
N° 1 Nespereira	N° 39 Patra	N° 37 Cacto
N° 3 e 4 Cana-do-açúcar	N° 16 Anoneira	N° 25 Loureiro
N° 30 Erva-príncipe	N° 43 Alecrim	N° 41 Arruda
N° 48 Figueira	N° 23 Cana-do-açúcar	N° 8 Mangueira
N° 51 Hibiscus	N° 18 Piprô	N° 22 Bananeira



awarded the artistic platform ‘Africa.Cont’ sponsorship to design and implement the platform with an assigned web development team.¹¹⁴ Although, at the time and for the opening ceremony there was not enough time to design such a platform and edit all the contents properly. Nevertheless, we decided to create a webpage aimed to present and make public the project. Through pictures and disclosure of the identity tags, it was a short report on the process of making the ‘Vitória Gardens Collection’ that also featured the texts produced by the researchers and the logo brands of all the partners of the project along with their respective responsibilities and support in the implementation.

Meanwhile, the printing and installation of the identity tags was taking place. The trees and plants were receiving special care from the ward gardeners, as they were to receive from that moment on, as the collection became an actual public garden. On the 8th of July, 2015, the ‘Vitória Gardens Collection’ was inaugurated. The event took place in an afternoon marked by the appearance in mass of the Hindu Community and former residents of Quinta da Vitória who came to see and remember their trees and plants, and also read their names in the identity tags.

The ceremony began with the public speeches of the Loures Municipality represented by the division of culture, the Portela de Sacavém Ward represented by the director who had been the protagonist in every discussion and negotiation about the collection, and the artist. All three spoke about the importance of recognizing differences. The presence of another garden within an existing garden, highlighting the encounter and coexistence of different practices and identities in a common place that makes room for the generation of new ones. Because it is about a garden made of gardens, the artist whistled how the image of Quinta da Vitória emerged anew, when it was founded on situated quotidian practices, rather than superimposed preconceived ideas about life in vulnerable territories.

On that day, it was visible how Quinta da Vitória was not only a memory but actually lived through the trees and the plants that were present, and all the people visiting and passing by the collection. Experienced as a public garden, the collection performed exactly the bonds that tear down differences but that are built on differences. Each tree and plant is a living specimen of a specific way of relating with land and gardening, but also a living proof that shows how they can flourish with others and in other places in different ways.

114 See <http://www.jardinsdavitoria.pt>

Figure 75 (p. 252) Stills of the first webpage. © Design: Inês Veiga, Web development: João Martins

Figure 76 (p. 252) The identity tags: installing the ceramic plates. © Sofia Borges, Inês Veiga



3.4.2 Through the binocular of indiscipline: the trees, the contract and the identity tags

Through the binocular of indiscipline, this case accounts the design journey of transforming a neighbourhood into a garden. In this journey, it becomes increasingly visible how much communication is a condition of design not only its product. Instead of assembling the life-stories of Quinta da Vitória and a number of pictures or drawing representations of the trees, the dwellers, the descriptions of everyday practices... To make a book, a catalogue, a campaign, an exhibition... Design is about collecting trees to live as a garden. Visual communication is not an aim in itself and it does not end in transmitting information. In fact, it is not even a matter or purpose of transmission, rather communication is a matter of design that unfolds as an ongoing, graphic and non-graphic, socialization between and among trees, the artist, the Ward, the ward gardeners, the Hindu community, the identification plates, the stories, the citizens and diverse others, who together make the impossible appear possible. Considering socially engaged practices of design are ABOUT THE HOW, in this case, BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS charge constantly new directions and possibilities for design and DESIGN IS *still* THE SITUATION that grows and unfolds as a practice of “border-crossing” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 201) which destabilizes the discipline of design while it simultaneously articulates acts of designing performed and supported in differentiated ways through different living and material things. What if this case captures the reversal of priorities in design? To shift focus from an aesthetics and ethics of fixed and fixing forms, to the aesthetics and ethics of the social design encounter? A shift from socialization as a choice to socialization as a condition for design?

3.4.2.1 ACT I: trees

Through the binocular of indiscipline, trees are living selves which are not just represented they can also represent, and the specific trees in Quinta da Vitória can do so without having to speak (Kohn, 2013, p. 92). In the midst of the disappearance of the neighbourhood, the trees emerge conspicuously present on the verge of disappearing themselves. In the encounter with the artist they become extraordinary, radically visible and dependent on the artist, just like they once depended upon, lived by and with their owners. The exchange that takes place between the trees and the artist is not the habitual “subject–object relationship” in which the artist turns the trees into objects of her own work, while the trees, as subjects, confront the artist with a non-negotiable situation. “Instead, their bodily co-presence creates a relationship between co-subjects.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.

Figure 77 (p. 253) The ceremony event: the Hindu Community and former residents of Quinta da Vitória. The ‘Vitória Gardens Collection’ as a public garden. The main tags to identify the whole collection. The catalogue © Sofia Borges, Design: Inês Veiga

32). The emergence of trees as artistic matter or something to design with was due to how they appeared in context or in relation to the world around them. Appearing vividly present through the presence of machines, the absence of their owners, the presence of the artist, the ongoing disappearance of every house, the remaining traces of stories and memories of the neighbourhood, these altogether in tension produced a composition. A ‘garden made of gardens’ was not a “revelation” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 186) that the artist conceived alone and developed into an idea, proposal or process. The world has its own enchantment so to speak¹¹⁵ and meaning – which consists in material relations of aboutness – was precisely in the interactions between elements and interplay between presences and absences that spaced appearance of a new kind of ‘we’. Conceiving the idea of making a ‘garden made of gardens’ was not categorically different from how bodies, things and space relate to each other. The “revelation” was the event of designing the composition made by the extraordinary presence, absence and tensions between diverse selves, things and circumstances. It was marked by “the ability to confuse” (Kohn, 2013, p. 92), thus, to conceive everything as a whole through under-determination and reveal that in the middle of destruction there was a garden.

Constituted through the design construct these kinds of “revelations” revoke, according to Fischer-Lichte, the dichotomy between presence and representation (2008, p. 99). They became visible, significant, or stand as some idea, thought, action or projection, not by being transmitted through some concrete medium, but because they are actually “alive” or actually taking place as an ongoing relational process that connects and composes (designs) meanings and materiality together into signs in the here and now.¹¹⁶ The ‘garden made of gardens’ as a project was already present in the neighbourhood in the bodily-material manifestations in the present, whose same participants and relationships performatively generate as well – through the same ongoing corporality, materiality and spatiality – representations of the future. The ‘garden made of gardens’ emerges as a “sort of afterlife, which is closely related to but not reducible to the life that has come before it” (Kohn, 2013, p. 195). Drawing from the fact that designing is an act of

115 Here we are referring Kohn as he briefly describes “living thoughts” and “selves”: “Wherever there are “living thoughts” there is also a “self.” “Self,” at its most basic level, is a product of semiosis. It is the locus—however rudimentary and ephemeral—of a living dynamic by which signs come to represent the world around them to a “someone” who emerges as such as a result of this process. The world is thus “animate.” “We” are not the only kind of we. The world is also “enchanted.” Thanks to this living semiotic dynamic, mean-ing (i.e., means-ends relations, significance, “aboutness,” telos) is a constitutive feature of the world and not just something we humans impose on it.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 16)

116 As Kohn argues: “signs are more than things. They don’t squarely reside in sounds, events, or words. Nor are they exactly in bodies or even minds. They can’t be precisely located in this way because they are ongoing relational processes. Their sensuous qualities are only one part of the dynamic through which they come to be, to grow, and to have effects in the world. In other words signs are alive. [...] alive insofar as it will come to be interpreted by a subsequent sign in a semiotic chain that extends into the possible future.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 33)

collecting the actual trees of Quinta da Vitória to make a garden, the journey points to another logic of designing that is performed and experienced in this case. The ‘garden made of gardens’ as a visual communication product is not something to be experienced as an aesthetic fixed and static appearance of Quinta da Vitória lacking real physicality. Rather, representing and presenting the neighbourhood is a continuation of the appearing of bodies and things in their being-in-the-world and in relation to each other that matters for design conception and visual communication production.

3.4.2.2 ACT II: the contract

The ‘garden made of gardens’ was a collection of trees and plants from the Quinta da Vitória neighbourhood to be situated and experienced on an existing garden in the Portela district not too far from the original place. When the collection becomes real, “survival” as how to go about inhabiting a future (Kohn, 2013, p. 195) becomes an immediate and authentic challenge for the trees. In the new place, there is a new soil and a completely different environment. For the collection, it would be tragic if the trees did not survive, for without them, there is no design, no collection and no memory of the neighbourhood to endure. Transplanting the trees and their appearance in the new place becomes an index of the likely future when the collection living as a garden will depend on the Ward and the ward gardeners to survive as much as it already depends on the artist, and the trees once depended on their owners.

The contract is a tactic¹¹⁷ that appears as a non-design gesture in the situation. Although, it’s through the contract that the Ward, the ward gardeners and the Hindu community become co-responsible for the trees, hence, the sustained continuity of the collection as a ‘garden made of gardens’. The contract posits that “value” in the survival and possibility to live well¹¹⁸ of the trees and the artistic collection is shared and extends to consider the moral and political implications that an artistic project may have in the disappearance of a neighbourhood (Kohn, 2013, p. 134). When the artistic collection meets with the new citizens in the area, who by their everyday practices pose another threat to the trees, and even at some point some of them come to argue for their eviction, it’s the Ward who mediates between the citizens and the artist for an agreement to keep the project going and the everyday

117 Here we use the notion of “tactics” rather than strategies following Mazé and Ericsson (2010), as explained in chapter 2.

118 In Kohn’s sense, [o]ur moral worlds can affect nonhuman beings precisely because there are things that are good or bad for them. And some of those things that are good or bad for them are also, we might learn if we could learn to listen to these beings with whom our lives are entangled, good or bad for us as well.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 134)

practices in place. This unexpected “role reversal” became successful in spacing appearance for the collection, that translated into moving the trees to the margins of the grass field, while affording the everyday practices to continue taking place. What we are regarding here is that the contract is a political and delicate gesture that challenges the autonomy of designing a visual communication project (the right and possibility of every individual to design something for herself), while simultaneously “dramatizes”, in Fischer-Lichte’s terms, the relevance and meaning of designing the visual communication project itself. The contract is a design gesture to intentionally implicate others and emphasise in greater vividness of experience and action their design response abilities in the project. Through the “dramatization” or de-trivialization of “all too human” matters amplifying everything that is non-design or that belongs to the realm of social life – the importance of, and literally, the survival of the trees, or of the sacred rituals performed by the Hindu community around trees, or of creating a memory of a disappearing community – the contract successfully distinguishes the collection from ordinary reality. Simultaneously demonstrating how the collection is dependent on ordinary reality and showing how reality can become extraordinary through the collection. By making design intentionally and consciously social, the contract accomplishes precisely what it performs. The Ward, the ward gardeners and the Hindu community become co-subjects in designing the collection, thereby, exercising their design abilities and power to conceive, transform and sustain the collection in manners that might enable ‘us’ to grow and flourish as a garden made of gardens.

3.4.2.3 ACT 3: the identity tags

The process of becoming with the artist changed what it meant for the trees to be alive. In turn, the trees changed the WHAT was the collection and HOW designing unfolded.

Transplanting the trees to the new place did not necessarily de-semanticized but erased the trees’ uniqueness. Detached from a situated extraordinary presence and located in the existing garden in Portela it would be easy to confuse them with all the other *normal* trees around. The challenge in the new place was one of presence and representation. How to communicate the trees of Quinta da Vitória, marking which of them belongs to the collection? The trees were the locus of designing, in the sense that it is their presence which counts for the ‘garden made of gardens’. Still, appearing in a new terrain as the trees of Quinta da Vitória, implied that new aesthetic relationships with real physicality needed to be found (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Kohn, 2013). This marks the emergence of the identity tags.

One made for each tree, the identity tags are constitutive of the tree in its “continuity

of being” (Kohn, 2013, p.116). That is to say, a tree without a tag is not a tree of the collection. This is a vital matter for the tree, because the trees of the ‘garden made of gardens’ have guaranteed special care from the ward gardeners, which is something another tree in the area may or may not have. In addition, the identity tags became instrumental to transmit fragments of memories and the life-stories of Quinta da Vitória. This particular feature marks a significant distinction between the trees and the identity tags as both visual communication means in the project. The trees are a special type of “presentation” in the sense “[t]hey not only produce and stress a special presence but perform it ... [T]hey not only *produce* presence but *present* presence” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 187). They invoke the world of Quinta da Vitória in a way that is metaphoric, allegoric but also real, as life itself. They are living things, a real part and appearance that “represents” and simultaneously “performs” the life, the people, the things in and of Quinta da Vitória. We can hardly get more deeply involved or approximate the neighbourhood more closely than in the presence of the trees (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.206). In turn, the identity tags do not generate presence, nor perform Quinta da Vitória. The neighbourhood is “represented” in the stories and fragments of information that the plates contain, not precisely “presented” by the physical or material appearance of the plate itself. How the identity tags “present” Quinta da Vitória is through others, and the relationships established with them and the surroundings. Still, the tags do generate presence, although not authentically that of the life of the neighbourhood, but the more immediate appearances of the trees and the stories. The tags are a support, a means or mediation that carry, literally, others. It is another special type of “presentation” that produces and stresses the special presences of others, which can only become what they are through them. The identity tags perform the presence of the trees as something significant, because their material presence stresses or signals that there may be something important to know about what is closer to them but can only be known if one reaches closer. Being the medium and material that gives appearance to text and the trees, the tags perform the presence of something unknown or to know, in which, text is the medium and material that gives appearance to the stories and meaning possible.

What determines the meaning of the trees in the new garden is not solely their function as individual presentations but how they are present and relate *socially* to what is around them. The identity tags qualify the trees in continuity of being by connecting them to all the elements that can contribute to create a chain of real connections with their specific past lived with specific persons in a particular place (Kohn, 2013). The trees, the stories, the text and the identity tags make a difference for each other, and together they constitute a “single form in communicative communion” (Kohn, 2013, p. 111) that communicates, presents, represents and performs the life of Quinta da Vitória that once existed in another place.

In summary, transplanting the trees from one place to another meant simultaneously the design of a new social world where the trees could remain integral parts. Holding to new supports, the trees of Quinta da Vitória appear and continue alive as what they are — not any trees but the trees that lived and belonged to Quinta da Vitória. Still the world that the trees, the identity plates and the stories form as an image and intimation of an absent past also extends towards the future (Kohn, 2013, p. 78). Through the appearance of other selves who become semiotically connected, the collection IS A LIVING THING.

For instance, when the Hindu community arrives to perform rituals with the Peepal tree (*Ficus religiosa*), which is one of the sacred trees in the collection, or when the ward gardeners are paying special attention to specific trees, or even when anonymous citizens appear reading the plates, the “interrelations among these different selves and objects perform a relatively more nuanced and exhaustive presence and representation of Quinta da Vitória (Kohn, 2013). Even though what these selves do does not match precisely what once existed – but occurs in the present anew or indicative of what it may have looked and been experienced “like” in Quinta da Vitória – they “present” the neighbourhood as indeed a ‘garden made of gardens’. Due to the real appearances of the gardeners, former residents of Quinta da Vitória, and other humans who come to experience the garden, the neighbourhood actually lives in another form. The socialization process that takes place between trees, stories and tags that *designs* and sustains the representation of Quinta da Vitória spatially and temporally, is in turn sustained by these human and nonhuman presences that *design* and support the presence of Quinta da Vitória in the here and now as a new interdependent social world. Therefore, all these improbable selves mediate to signal and value aesthetically and semiotically the presence of not any collection but the ‘garden made of gardens’ while also dramatizing and maintaining its physical appearance and presence as a living thing itself.

3.4.3 Design is a living thing

3.4.3.1 The logic of the living: forming visual appearance and forms of non-linguistic visual communication

The trees, the identity tags and the contract configure three episodes in which communication and representation are not static visual outputs of design. The three situations reveal different modes in which communication and representation occur as relational designing processes or form-acts that are not about designing appearances as visual presence effects, but about designing ways in which things appear visible and present, designed, through various and ongoing interactions. Through the binocular of indiscipline, seeing the three episodes from the lens of “direct” communicative strategies whereby participants “enjoy a sort of parity” (Kohn, 2013, p. 148), or “oblique” forms in which communication is possible due to an ongoing negotiation of roles, agency and power between participants and a hierarchical relationship constantly reproduced (Kohn, 2013, p. 143). There is a LIVING logic to design that carries beyond designing fixed and static forms of appearance but entails non-symbolic form-acts of communication that pertain to design as an indiscipline.

Our notion of “living thing” is drawn from Kohn’s (2013) notion of “living semiosis”¹¹⁹ that we also captured through the binocular. It refers to a logic of association and relationality between bodies, things, material and significance, that is not located in the mind of individual humans but occurs as specific configurations of the present. It is as if design was a live event which involved everything and everyone present at a specific time and place in projective abduction, hence, into participants of a design space bringing design into being. As we have seen, designing the ‘garden made of gardens’ begins with the trees in Quinta da Vitória. It’s their real and original presence, as LIVING THINGS, in the middle of destruction, that aesthetically, and in particular visually, transform the neighbourhood into another thing. In the encounter with the artist a “direct” exchange occurs as both participants reveal a design space. In another place, the trees are able to survive independently by being interdependently related to other things and the established caring practices of the ward gardeners. Yet, the continuation of the neighbourhood as a garden and collection of trees is not something that the trees can communicate “directly”. Through an “oblique” form of communication, the identity tags afford the trees their identity as different trees situated in an existing garden. Moreover, the identity tags as ceramic plates entail the “direct” visual appearance and presence of the stories, which associated

¹¹⁹ As Kohn argues, “[h]ow thoughts grow by association with other thoughts is not categorically different from how selves relate to one another.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 99)

“obliquely” with each tree mark them as central powerful pieces of the collection. The trees and the identity tags are forms of appearance in the artistic collection due to their functional role as visual communication design outcomes. For the sake of communicating and representing Quinta da Vitória, however, more important than their independent static and visual appearance, IT’S ABOUT HOW they appear as “form-acts” spacing appearance of other forms and form-acts in the continuity. Grasping tree-plates together, is a “direct” form-act of design that enables the perception of a whole collection and its respective parts. The ways the identity tags relate to the trees, or the trees relate to the stories, the logic through which they altogether relate or socialize is “semiotic”. That is to say, representing each other’s meanings or communicating each other’s presences, means that communication structures the relationships among them and it is communication what they achieve together (Kohn, 2013, p. 83). Moreover, their form of appearance stems from the need to form the appearance of others and the particular living and representational logics these others entail (Kohn, 2013, p. 83).

The meaning of not having any pictures, of people, the neighbourhood, and only working with text. There was a constellation of possible ways of visually presenting or making present the trees and the stories. Why ceramic plates? Why there is no single picture of the trees in the former neighbourhood? Why there are no pictures of the owners? In the catalogue that was produced for the launching of the collection, the selected pictures only portrait the trees when the neighbourhood is disappearing. The matter is about respecting the privacy of the people and the neighbourhood, although it is also beyond a moral issue. If the neighbourhood’s “survival depends on the ability of people to access a past that makes the “living future possible” (Kohn, 2013, p. 195), the issue is a matter of “dramatizing” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 201) the experience of erasure and deliberately make an archive of traces that recall “obliquely” a place full of life in contrast with a place where neoliberal agendas take space and place. The power of the text lies precisely in the potential for “oblique” associative generations of meaning in “directly” perceiving what is visually present: the trees. The communicative capacity of typography, set in black on a white canvas, lies not in itself as in its direct appearance, but in how it relates with the site where reading takes place, forming words and sentences which (also through its mixture of bolds and italics), more importantly, relate to and signal “obliquely” everything else: the trees, the practices, the living garden as such, and as if the neighbourhood was still there. The category of “as if” is more fundamental for designing the memory and living continuation of the neighbourhood as a living garden, than the literal (concrete and static) ethnographic or imagery descriptions of what Quinta da Vitória was like, who were the people and how they lived.

When the Hindu community performs sacred rituals with the Peepal tree, or the gardeners are watering the trees of the collection, or someone is caught reading a plate, these elusive presences articulate “oblique” forms of communicating the ‘garden made of gardens’. Even if temporarily, their presence picks up the flow of social life in the present to “obliquely” communicate the presence of Quinta da Vitória in the here and now. Let’s take a closer look. Through the binocular of indiscipline, when the ward gardeners are catering for the trees, that is an action which is part of re-producing the ‘garden made of gardens’ not exactly using it. Taking care of the trees makes the gardeners physically and visually related, in an aesthetic sense, expanding an individual agency and the meaning and materiality of their actions to signal the importance of specific trees and the presence of tags. They become, in oblique sense, part of the ecology that mediates, communicates and performs the presence of the ‘garden made of gardens’ in different moments in time. They become elusive momentary co-designers of the collection.

Through and through designing is a product of sign processes and carries along revealing the extraordinary in the ordinary through the encounter with unexpected others.

The appearance of the contract is another example. Even though the artist is already engaged with the trees in an artistic way, the contract is a non-linguistic gesture that reveals the artist thinking with the tree’s thoughts¹²⁰ (Kohn, 2013, p. 100). Despite her best intentions, the project alone cannot guarantee the survival and possibility of the trees to grow well in the existing garden. Taking the form of a legal proposal, thinking with the Ward’s thoughts, the contract emerges as an “oblique” way for the artist to more formally implicate the Ward and the gardeners in the collection. Interestingly, when the project is at stake, it’s the Ward, who experiences itself thinking with the artist’s thoughts, advocating for the continuity of the collection with all the social, political and ethical implications. So far in the process, the artist and the Ward were already interacting. What makes possible to transplant the trees to another place, is a feedback loop between them, forming the appearance of the gardeners on the demolition site to realise the process (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). However, at this stage, the artist and the Ward were connected through bridging actions as their continuous exchange remained an “oblique” back-and-forth.¹²¹ That is to say, they were not directly conjoined in action (as the human-flags, for instance) but maintained a critical distance from each other,

120 Here we are paraphrasing Kohn in his argument about “thinking with the forest”. From the original: “They come to think with the forest’s thoughts, and, at times, they even experience themselves thinking with the forest’s thoughts. (Kohn, 2013, p. 100)”

121 Here we can draw from Gatt and Ingold to argue that “[t]he implication of the prefix inter- in interaction is that the interacting parties are closed to one another, as if they could only be connected through some kind of bridging operation. Any such operation is inherently detemporalizing, cutting across the paths of movement and becoming rather than joining along with them.” (Gatt and Ingold, 2013, p. 143)

that in practice secured their institutional roles and agency for ‘what is art’ and ‘what is politics’ in the things they did or made together. This kind of “oblique” social design relationship, interestingly, justifies the need for something like a contract. So far, the design relationship did not guarantee that the trees and the collection would survive, from each partial point of view. Later on, as we regard how the contract “directly” hands over the question of the project to the ward as a design gesture, entrusting full responsibility for the present and the future of the artistic collection (Mazé, 2016, p. 41). Moreover, in an “oblique” way how it simultaneously highlights a superior hierarchical position of the ward in making the project possible in the public space and in the city, it transforms the ward into a co-designer.

The contract makes visible what Kohn calls the phenomenon of “thinking with the forest”, through which, as we have described, the ward and the artist come to think with each other’s thoughts and experience themselves thinking with the tree’s thoughts (Kohn, 2013, p. 100). These kinds of relationships that “entwine” participants, their movements and ensuing gestures, goes beyond a feedback loop exchange. It occurs as a practice of mutual indiscipline and becoming anew in indiscipline, that implies from participants a bodily or material “exposure and disposition” to meet each other, but also to be transformed by the encounter.

Through the binocular of indiscipline, when design unfolds through modes of “thinking with and like” (Kohn, 2013, p. 227) beyond the modes of opposition or those “built from quanta of difference” (Kohn, 2013, p. 100) between participants, design achieves, we might say “the reenchantment of the world”. To give another example, the fact that the location of the trees changes as a consequence of the encounter with the citizens means that through “direct” exchanges the project emerges transformed in an immediate physical way (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 18). In the process of negotiating the future of the collection “value” is a quality that becomes shared while it simultaneously means different things for different participants. The fact that the visual appearance of the collection changes, means that the Ward, the citizens and the artist enjoyed “a sort of parity” enabling each to participate in the ongoing life of the other, without thereby losing autonomy or ceding to persuasion. Indiscipline is literally embodied by participants in the coming together with others. As they become together in “direct” or “oblique” communion the designing process expands, beyond disruption, crossing the limits and blurring between art, design, politics and everyday life. In this view, the contract is not an inert object but a “form-act” that travels along through the twists and turns of the designing process, as different images of the performance of becoming together between the artist, the ward and the trees to design the project’s continuity and existence (Kohn, 2013, p. 150).

To conclude, the non-graphic communication of the collection as a ‘garden made of gardens’ matches the diffuse direct and oblique social and visual exchanges that take place between diverse humans, trees, things and spaces. What occurs is a perpetual transformation of what is ordinary into components of the design process and outcome of the ‘garden made of gardens’ ever since trees appeared extraordinary in relation to an environment of destruction. As we have seen through the binocular, before there is a memory to preserve, there is a neighbourhood that exists although it is disappearing. The end of Quinta da Vitória is what makes extraordinary the trees as BEGINNINGS¹²² for designing a possible continuity of the neighbourhood. Through the trees the neighbourhood is suddenly brought forth anew, taking place or *still alive*, as another thing in the middle of destruction. Turning the impossible into something plausible, when different kinds of machines enter the neighbourhood not to destroy but to collect the trees, the impossible becomes probable as we are able to guess the “form” of the future (Kohn, 2013). The visual appearance of the ‘garden made of gardens’ appears to be not separate from the very process of the visual and physical disappearance of Quinta da Vitória and the visual emergence of the trees as extraordinary things, picked up to convey the neighbourhood forward, in another visual form. Further along, the need to identify the trees emerged from, did not precede or it was not conceived before, the presence of the trees in the new place. Communication was a necessary condition and a vital matter for the trees of Quinta da Vitória not a choice. Semiotic relations, or material representations of meaning that occur in the present seem to inaugurate and become constitutive of design conception in this case. The things, gestures and decisions that emerge in the design process are structured by how participants go on making sense of what is happening and collectively relate to furthermore participants in time. The logic of design matches “the semiotic quality of life” in that the form that design takes is the product of how participants first and foremost encounter the world around them (Kohn, 2013, p. 78). In other words, the project of designing a ‘garden made of gardens’, emerged from, did not precede, the radical presence of the trees in Quinta da Vitória. Out of the habitual mode, intentions and goals of design are not conceived by a group in the design space but they are already spatial compositions precisely crafted from within improbable tensions. It’s through a kind of living logic that designing the collection unfolds.¹²³ Design is a practice of ongoing designing communication

122 Drawing from Kohn, the fact that the trees are alive, surviving in the middle of destruction is a revelation. They emerge as forms of resistance to the undergoing slow end of the neighbourhood, in the sense that the continuity of the trees is actually made possible due to the space each of the many “deaths” in the situation open up for an extraordinary presence and even the emergence of other things (Kohn, 2013, p. 222).

123 “The semiotic quality of life—the fact that the forms that life takes are the product of how living selves represent the world around them” (Kohn, 2013, p. 78)

in a “living semiotic” sense, in which to communicate, to represent and make present meanings and things *visually* and *visibly* is everything participants do and a BEGINNING from where and when everything starts and happens.

3.4.3.2 From pure discipline to pure indiscipline: design is a living thing

The three episodes, seen as cases of indiscipline, perform an expansion of design in the encounter with others (see chapter 3.3). The trees, the identity tags and the contract appear as BEGINNINGS in the situation, opening up the design process for extraordinary things to happen. The more interesting about each episode is that, through their reception and use, in different ways the trees, the identity tags and a contract precisely perform the “transgression and transition” that moves participants from situated challenges conveying design forward through expansion. The way the ‘the garden made of gardens’ grows and flourishes as a LIVING THING reveals that WHAT the garden is and HOW it becomes are not two separate events but a whole and ongoing designing appearance of Quinta da Vitória both in its erasure and living existence.¹²⁴

If we take an all-too-design perspective, communicating the disappearance of Quinta da Vitória could have been ‘solved’ with a book, a catalogue, a series of posters, or range existing outputs carefully picked up from the discipline of graphic design. Yet, as Kohn points out, if “representation is something both more general and more widely distributed than human language” that implies non-linguistic forms of communication and interaction (Kohn, 2013, p. 38), design is not so much about *reproduction* and *representation* as it is about *invention* and *presentation*. The remarkable character of DESIGN AS A LIVING THING in this case lies not in the novelty or originality of redesigning visually prefigured solutions. That is to say, the trees, the identity tags and a contract are not imported forms from elsewhere — “the same displaced” as Haraway argues (1992, p. 300). It’s by opening up towards that which lies beyond graphic design as a discipline, that trees become visual means and material, gardeners became real visual means and material... In the designing process and outcome of this case. Visual communication, therefore, is not *merely* an END and design is not a non-aesthetic journey carrying through condensation modes. The underlying experiential design process, beyond a feedback loop, happens as an autopoietic self-organizing system of relationships of communication among participants. The journey from the disappearance of a neighbourhood into appearing in another form is an ongoing communication

¹²⁴ In the process by which Quinta da Vitória is simultaneously produced and foreclosed via the violence of eviction, and neo-colonial capitalist top-down orders, it appears present and presents itself in its erasure through the designing process of the collection (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 193).

achievement by different relational compositions that grow and shift over time in living visual appearance and presence. The design outcome is not the garden as a fixed and complete visual installation in a new place. The *final* form of appearance of the garden is composed by the trees as the actual physical trees, the tags, the Hindu community performing rituals in the sacred trees in ongoing relational designing. If we regard DESIGN IS THE SITUATION, these visible presences communicate a difference in the existing garden, hence they become part of the whole designing process and outcome of the garden made of gardens. The non-linguistic exchanges also make visible how participants perform indiscipline – as disruption of their own habits – to respond with passion, openness and flexibility to others and potentially ever-changing social circumstances. Visual signs emerge as BEGININGS NOT ENDS to convey designing forward. The tangible end of the neighbourhood becomes the BEGINNING of a garden. The probable end of the trees becomes the BEGINING of a project. The end of the meaning of the trees becomes the BEGINING of the identity tags. The end of the design project becomes the BEGINING of co-design. Avowing the extraordinary visible, all these ending signs and facts of finitude afford the moments that invite design to “cross-borders” and limits of institutions, disciplines, art and life, experts and non-experts, subjects and objects (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 203). Becoming socially engaged is precisely not to lose autonomy but to build heteronomy and affinity with others that does not de-constitute or de-value any goal, project or participant rather constitutes them into different kinds of ‘we’ compositions or tensions or relationships of communication. Freedom and expression in visual designing are not opposed to a living obligation and care for others. In fact, they depend upon each other, to account the indiscipline that is performed in the improvisations and transformations that occurred in the course of designing Quinta da Vitória into a living thing. Shaping visual form in order to communicate something, or communicating something in order to shape visual form, are interweaved design practices in this case. Therefore, there is no direct combination of elements that can visually result in the complete communication of the whole ‘garden made of gardens’. Yet each part achieves the form of the ‘garden made of gardens’ in relation to all the others. In this sense, the ‘garden made of gardens’ as a design thing can only be comprehended as a LIVING THING which is an ongoing process of which static and complete versions are different living moments caught in time and space. The form of the ‘garden made of gardens’, depends on the goal of designing not any garden but the ‘garden made of gardens’. Still, the ‘garden made of gardens’ is a design product that takes the form of HOW each encounter and social engagement unfolds between an expanding web of diverse selves (Kohn, 2013, p. 78; Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The living logic is a semiotic logic of designing, that is similar to an aesthetic journey in which the journey is itself the goal. It frames

such an *indisciplined* situation of design that beyond the mechanical efficacy of achieving something concrete rather it amplifies how participants constantly find themselves without discipline but use discipline for its own under-determination and precisely compose something significant and extraordinary together. DESIGN IS A LIVING THING is in the ways that indiscipline constitutes the whole spatial and experiential design practice in this case.

Trusting the challenges and potentials of design as an indiscipline, designing visual communication IS A LIVING THING, that is, a social journey based on a living present capacity to correspond with design precision to unexpected others and emergent everyday life and real design problematics. This is a fundamental insight to grasp and understand within the parameters of a graphic design and visual communication design practice. As we hope to have demonstrated with this case, any graphic design act, gesture or thing which is positively in itself, to the neglect of the rest of the world it is part of, comes into clash with the fact that the world beyond design, paraphrasing Kohn (2013, p. 72), is not a meaningless one made meaningful by the expert. The episode with the trees demonstrates that to be visual, to be communication, and to be design, does not mandatorily need to involve typography, colour, 2-dimensional forms, white space, pictures, ink, books, catalogues, signs for street, campaigns... Yet, this is what is commonly understood as the toolbox of a visual designer and what she habitually and conventionally brings to the table. The fact that trees can *brand* a place, forming appearance of a neighbourhood into another visual thing; or that trees are a living visual identity of Quinta da Vitoria marking its survival, hopefully shows that designing visual communication in this case entails matter as an active agent in conception and composition. Among the many matters that were present and with which it would be possible for a graphic designer or visual artist to correspond with the world, the trees are a possible matter. The matters we use to support our particular disciplines or professions, frame how open or how narrow is our visual toolbox, but they also demonstrate how matters come to matter more than others as we become socially engaged with others. DESIGN IS A LIVING THING is not a case about going with the flow of whatever happens, not a design quest for the invention of the new, nor a case of reducing realism to what exists picking the suitable solutions because these were effective in another place or because they define what is our discipline. The dissonance we aim to provoke in claiming that DESIGN IS A LIVING THING, is that designing as a social practice implies steering form, functions and intentions, not prior and not despite, but from and through social interactions. When things are not merely taken as content for an expert design ability to be exercised, but they matter in ways that prompt contextually dependent design gestures and forms, therein lies “the social” as the extraordinary in design and a neighbourhood made to live as a garden is accomplished.

Case Summary

Design is a living thing

image of indiscipline

move to indiscipline

Design Engagement

Collaboration in the Vitoria Gardens Collection by Sofia Borges

Diffuse designers

The artist, the Portela Ward, the Hindu community, the ward gardeners, the dwellers of Quinta da Vitória (owners of the trees)

Design experts

design researcher

Where

Portela District
Loures, Portugal

When

Jan-Jun 2015

- o **The design process** The Vitoria Gardens Collection is a project designed by artist Sofia Borges between 2012 - 2015 in the continuity of an interdisciplinary initiative that happened between 2007 - 2012. The project consists of a living archive of memories of the neighbourhood of Quinta da Vitória featuring the trees and plants that survived the demolition process and the stories about the everyday practices and religious rituals performed in the neighbourhood. To produce the archive and materialize the collection the artist involved a series of stakeholders and producers.

1. Conceiving the "garden made of gardens"



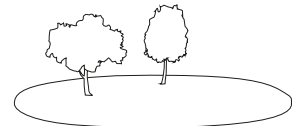
Design conception: in the middle of the disappearance of the neighbourhood the trees become extraordinarily visible and present

2. Transplantation of the trees and plants



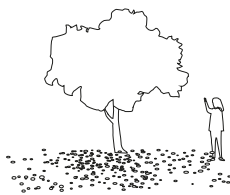
Made possible by the Ward who was already a participant in the project. Involvement of the ward gardeners who become responsible for the moving and care for the trees' survival on the new site.

3. The collection of trees in the new place



The appearance of the collection in the new place makes visible how the future of the archive is dependent upon the possibility of growing well of trees and plants.

- o **Unexpected event** the encounter between the trees and the artist can be considered a case of becoming another with another.

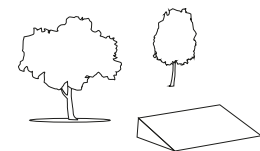
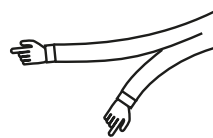


- o **Case study of indiscipline:** All the unexpected events that happened throughout the project.



- 3.1 **Unexpected event:** this generates the appearance of a contract where the artist donates the collection to the Portela Ward.

- o **Unexpected event:** when the collection is contested by the citizens who use the space that is now occupied by the trees and plants, the ward mediates the process and achieves the continuity of the project and the maintenance of the citizens' practices in the public space.



- 3.2 invitation of a design expert to conceive visual identity of the project and design the identity tags for each tree that may also present the life stories. The appearance of the identity tags enable each tree to become present as "the trees" of Quinta da Vitória (from ordinary to extraordinary nonhumans).

- o **Unexpected event:** When the Hindu community of the ward gardeners appear to perform rituals with some trees or paying special attention to specific trees they communicate the existence of the collection in the presente and propagate it into the future as a living thing.

Diagram 11. Case summary through the binocular of indiscipline.

INDISCIPLINE

Discussion

4. Discussion

Moving closer to our design engagements that account not a stable social design practice but a conventional design practice in transition, in this part, the four images of indiscipline are mobilized as potentials for rethinking different social spaces and experiences of design. As we can grasp in the [Diagram 12](#) the binocular of indiscipline is now set to more directly address the hypothesis that found this research. Exploring how and why design is a fundamentally open and underexplored discipline in terms of how it articulates the social as an object and matter this part is structured in two sections.

The first continues the mode of describing, explaining and exploring the cases through the binocular of indiscipline although the aim is to capture each situation of destabilization as if a different design space had opened up. In this section, we discuss how each unexpected event represents an expansion of design (or a situation when design became a more living thing), therefore, providing a clarification of each image of indiscipline as a different space or experience of design. To support this discussion the four design engagements are used interchangeably to exemplify and elucidate all the different images of indiscipline. The second explores more thoroughly the moves from discipline to indiscipline. Here we capture the four images through the historical and contemporary debates raised in the Research Outline thereby shifting from potential practices to ways of transforming design from within. In this section, each image of indiscipline turns into a specific move towards the social that represents the beginning of social design. By problematizing conventions and habits of the discipline the images of indiscipline turn into moves. By articulating already different spaces or experiences of design, in this part of the discussion they represent the beginning of social design as possible continuations of the design discipline.

Throughout the whole discussion there are no solid answers. What we do here is to trace the fundamental arguments and ideas that have emerged throughout the research process and that in fact transformed ours way of doing and understanding design. To conclude, a table summarises the images and moves of indiscipline in relation to conventional practice of design, furthermore, a final diagram accounts indiscipline as design journey increasingly engaged with the communities and the realities it encounters.

The Binocular of Indiscipline

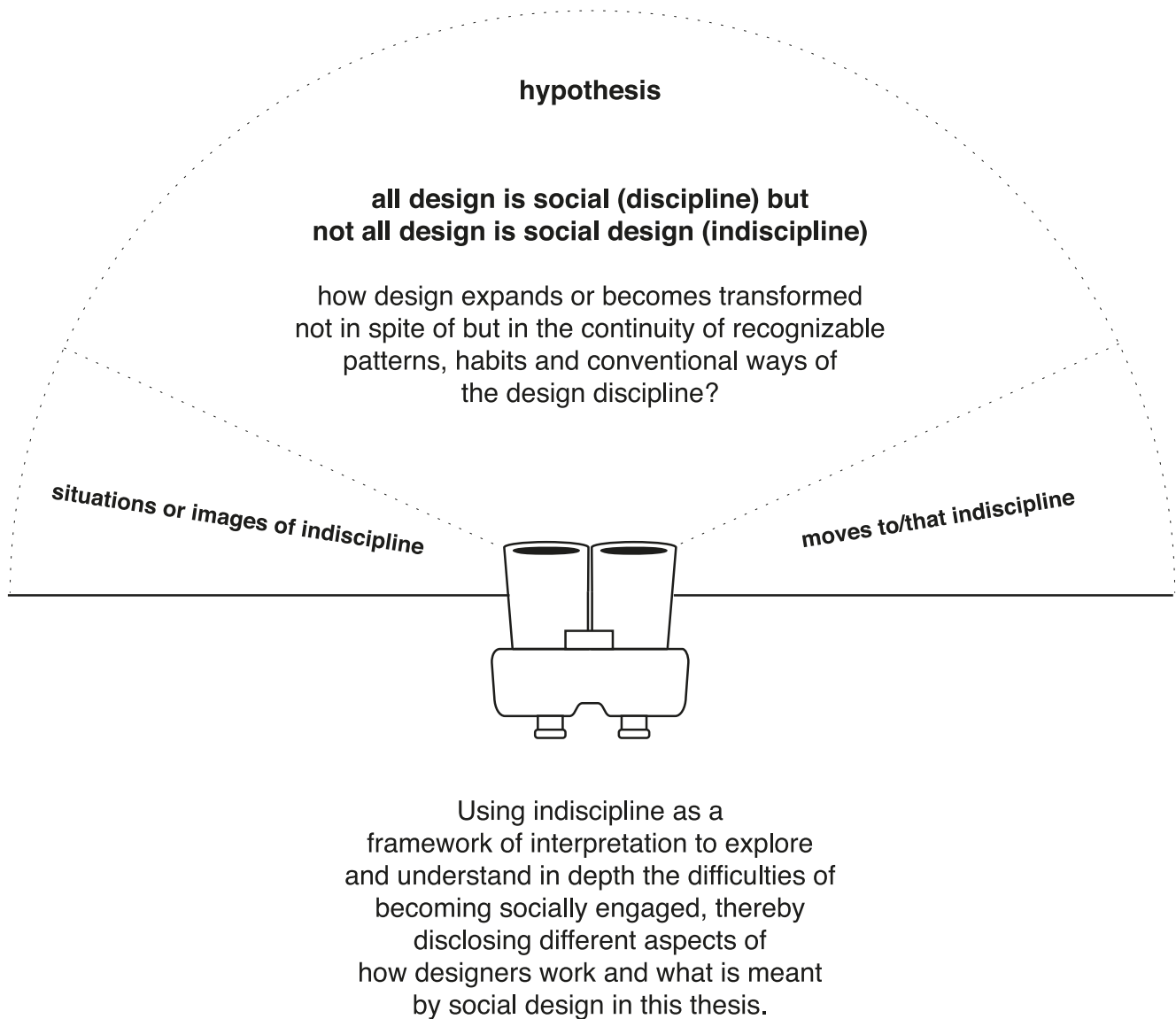


Diagram 12. The binocular of indiscipline set to discuss the hypothesis of this research.

4.1 The other side of discipline: images of indiscipline

4.1.1 It's about the 'how to' design

IT'S ABOUT THE HOW was the image of indiscipline that emerged from a design engagement marked by a dispute between diffuse designers and design experts. Engaged in constant affirmation and denial of the design space where the uses of the Largo were open to debate, the ERC project is a perfect metaphor for the social turn in design. It involved an expansion of the problems that conventional design addresses, moreover the approach was to engage the community to take an active role in designing possible ways to address the matters. In general, the problem of the project consisted in addressing the issue of public space quality in terms of the lack of green, enjoyable and safer spaces for community gathering and children to play. Expanding the project to the purposes and leadership of the community, the more specific problems of design were about how to engage the people and how to create spaces where they actively (comfortably) share insights and make things in the company of and with the support of design experts. In this sense, the problems addressed by the discipline graphic design and all the others in particular were expanded by the ways the discipline had to incorporate already in its processes and products a wider scope of attention to how the people got engaged or might be involved with the matters at stake. The tasks were not merely to design something and land it in the neighbourhood or hand it over to the people, we were already tuned to pay attention to how the things we did actually had an effect or influenced people to act.

Defining the social design space as the space where two groups of participants, diffuse designers and design experts, are engaged to design something together, through the binocular of indiscipline we observed the ways participants addressed each other implied an opposite and an intrinsic way of “being itself” in all its singularity” (Kohn, 2013, p. 86). That is to say, every design gesture and action suggested that there exist inconceivable differences¹²⁵ between them, and their background as either everyday life or the design discipline. While the researchers as design experts presumed a hierarchy and single sided agency in design but reclaimed an equal position in matters of everyday life, the people as diffuse designers constantly affirmed a superior position in matters of everyday

¹²⁵ Drawing from Kohn: “that there exist differences that are radically inconceivable—differences that are so unimaginable that they are “incognizable” as Peirce (1992d: 24) critically calls them” these are the very “hurdles” that “theories and practices of relating must strive to overcome” (Kohn, 2013, p. 86).

life reclaiming an equal position in design. Through this ongoing form-act of interaction, the two groups eventually became poles defining the patterns of how each side relates and knows the other in the design space. The ways both diffuse designers and design experts designed together eventually yield designing impossible onwards to accomplish nothing.

However, at points, the process did turn into an open negotiation of ‘why’, ‘what’ and ‘how’. Through the binocular of indiscipline, interestingly, this happened precisely when the design process did not coincide with the work of the experts rather it implied the relationship that enveloped the two groups. That is to say, whenever the researchers or the people implied in their individual actions a response or feedback from the other group, rather than assumed to know what the other side desired, needed or meant, then a common space of conception, invention and production opened up. This *design* space was where the danger, hope, reasons and the kind of public space transformation was negotiated because design was situated within the medial conditions of a communicative feedback loop¹²⁶ where both groups enjoyed a sort of parity. If the approach of the ERC project was to design with the people of Cova da Moura, more crucial than qualifying places, moments, gestures, things or relations by their design or non-design nature, it would have been fundamental to recognize that all participants were in fact socially designing.

To clarify, in the conventional design situation the work of design coincides with the work of the expert while the client waits for new developments to be called into presence and give feedback. To assume participants in the ERC project were engaged in a social design process means that the work of design was grounded in the feedback loop event. That is to say, production and reception were not separate practices but co-evolved at the same time so the quality of how all participants design in relation to each other matters for the design process. The specific circumstances of the appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspaper encouraged us to think that social design is indeed something more than how design experts work and what design experts do. The quality of how the people interacted in relation to the researchers revealed similar struggles to design, to find proper channels of communication and a language to materialize and transmit precisely what they meant. More specifically the disappearance of the wall-newspaper made clear how even in absence no just in co-presence diffuse designers and design experts remained connected to each other and the design space. The gesture articulated a role reversal that affirmed the people as producers turning the researchers into receivers or observers of the situation. Notwithstanding absence is embedded in

126 Drawing from Fischer-Lichte: “[t]he danger and hope of transformation is always situated within the specific medial conditions of performance; that is to say, they are implied in the physical co-presence of actors and spectators.” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 191).

the politics of design as a promise of presence which can hold the relationship together between clients and designers, absence in social design performed an expansion of 'where' and 'by whom' design takes place for the feedback loop event was still ongoing. If in conventional design it does not matter what clients do in the absence of design experts because the process relies on an oblique hierarchical relation¹²⁷ that is maintained by the fact that production and reception, or project-time and use-time¹²⁸, are separate roles assigned to specific participants. In social design, the emphasis is on the social part of designing which means more important than what participants do or produce individually is what 'what' they do does to the other, how it is directly received or influences the other to respond or produce something in return. Through the binocular of indiscipline, the logic of social design is similar to the logic of the aesthetics of the performative, hence, in different manners and degrees of depth, the people and the researchers were never outside design but always in designing.

The episode with the wall-newspaper, as a micro design event within the whole ERC project, demonstrates how the event of design was inaugurated when the graphic designer alone with the figure of the users in mind conceives the first wall-newspaper. But when the wall-newspaper emerges as a fixed and transferable design product that is not the end of designing. Receiving the wall-newspapers is still a continuation of the same design event because meaning and materiality are still in production when use happens as a form of projective abduction. In or after reception, absence was another constitutive moment of design not because it meant the researchers were designing things in project-time to bring to the neighbourhood for feedback, but because the people continued the design process as a feedback loop in project-time and in the absence of the researchers. The disappearance of the wall-newspapers made strikingly visible that design is limited if it follows the conventional modes and standards of the discipline which are based solely on how experts think about how others think. Through the binocular of indiscipline, it was clear how the researchers insisted on carrying on a conventional design process implying the community as clients who wait for the next workshop to be informed and give feedback about the process. Nevertheless, seeing the actions of the people of Cova da Moura as diffuse designers, the condition of the social ensured the feedback loop was in progress and while design was still the situation that involved and enveloped the researchers it did not imply their presence to continue or to be able to design. Recognizing that both design experts and diffuse designers were co-subjects in the same design space, was a crucial indiscipline

127 The feedback loop must not be confused with the conversation design experts have with materials and meanings having diffuse designers 'in mind' because here design happens through the prerogative of how design experts think about how others think assuming design as an individual act of expertise.

128 Huybretches et al., 2014, p. 54. (See 2.2.2.1)

for a project that claimed to be of ‘participatory’, ‘democratic’, or better ‘social’ design nature.

Observing the case with the trees, to give another example, we see how participants amplify the potentials of their encounter instead of augmenting each other’s differences. Precisely because there are real differences in ways of thinking and doing, hence communicating and designing, that is what binds participants together, the trees, the artist, the ward, and others, is design itself. IT’S ABOUT THE HOW is a hopeful insight that if we can see design as a social space where participants enjoy a sort of parity, then it is possible to induce modes of designing that can bring about spaces where things are fundamentally contested and truly co-designed. Specifically, in the episode with the contract, which similar to the disappearance of the wall-newspaper was another case of a non-design gesture that *designed*, it made visible HOW participants allowed the design logics of the other to appear in the design space in ways that worked for the common and shared benefit. Beyond instrumental relations — because ‘I’ know how to make public space interventions, books, catalogues, signs for streets, or because ‘I’ know this place, its local habits — the appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspapers as a case of indiscipline demonstrated that design depends on the social as the space and situation of designing. Moving away from the conventional form of design where feedback is an instrumental activity to advance an autonomous role of design, IT’S ABOUT THE HOW means to cater for the feedback loop as shared activity of design. In this shared, or better social, design space, participants act in relation to each other and imply the other in the actions yielding possible or impossible for the other to take part. The image of indiscipline in this case is about grasping the medial conditions of design grounded seeing all participants interact and communicate in design terms and design happening even in the absence of design experts in material and semiotic ways that are relevant for the collective and the matters at stake.

4.1.2 The social event is the design situation

To attend the day of the anniversary of a local organization in Cova da Moura and argue DESIGN IS THE SITUATION was to experience “the indiscipline of design” (Gentes, 2017). The contagious phenomenon of the human-flags demonstrated how the design process was an ongoing performance of projective abduction and under-determination (see chapter 2.3.1). Ever since flags emerged as an idea, the encounter between diverse humans and non-humans was an elusive and transient design pattern through which heterogeneous participants became composed into a whole and different individual kinds of ‘we’. Through the binocular of indiscipline, we can claim the under-determination of the flag was an invitation to assemble more and more humans, paper and chopsticks, and the under-determination of the upcoming day of the anniversaries was an invitation to anticipate expanded possibilities of celebration. Indiscipline was not precisely in the flags although flags were a sign of “the in-discipline of design” being practiced as human-flags emerged as the real design outcome of this case.

In the second case of indiscipline, DESIGN IS THE SITUATION is the image that makes sense of an extended performance of the design discipline that propagates in effortless efficacy through and as indiscipline. But the affirmation that DESIGN IS THE SITUATION can also have the unexpected effect of opening up different design spaces. To give an example, to claim DESIGN IS THE SITUATION when the wall-newspapers disappear is to attribute design value to a non-design gesture with the immediate consequence of expanding the boundaries of design and include the event of reception as a continuation of the space of conception and invention between participants. If that might be the case in the ERC project, we can speculate, recognizing an act of materialization for DESIGN beyond an authentic act of violence then the pattern of HOW participants were engaged in designing could have potentially changed. This does not mean we should accept anything that emerges in the design space regardless of its immediate and authentic form-act. Rather it means to recognize if DESIGN IS THE SITUATION that bounds participants together then IT’S ABOUT THE HOW and we should move to acknowledge the other as always and already a designer and pay attention to how designing is being performed in relational terms. As we have seen, the quality of HOW the wall-newspapers disappeared was not disconnected from how the wall-newspapers appeared in the neighbourhood. Considering the “form”¹²⁹ of how participants design, for instance, the researchers and the people of Cova da Moura in the previous case it consisted in and propagated as a feedback loop. Design is what binds participants together and guides their behaviour toward each

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In chapter 2.4 we can find the notion of forms articulated by Kohn, 2013.

other. Although, to be specific about the form of design participants carry out we then grasp the form-act of a feedback loop. The “form-act”¹³⁰ of how participants accomplish specific things is by perceiving and enacting destabilization in a self-reference system of teasing together instead of apart. Coming back to the case with the flags, the “form” of design that is generated as more and more people join the making of flags is the human-flag. The form-act through which the human-flag form is generated is a kind of design choreography based on indiscipline. The under-determination of the flag subtracted into pieces configures a moment of tension that invites composition, hence design. Subtraction triggers the form-act of projective abduction to accomplish the form of the human-flag. In other words, the production of flags is a spatial performative generation through a set of materials that foresee something to project instead of handing it over already made. While one human may be composing one flag another human who encounters this design event may become destabilized and triggered to join. Infection is the form-act through which human-flags propagate as a pattern of design until the process is terminated by all participants. The form of the human-flag is contagious because its form-act is precisely the gesture of designing the form of the human-flag. The indiscipline of design is the form of design in this case which consists precisely in the production and simultaneous accomplishment of the pattern, perception, making and experience of human-flags. DESIGN IS THE SITUATION precisely because the human-flag is both the design outcome of this case and the design process that brings it into being.

To clarify, forms and form-acts, in slightly different ways, account the specific aestheticity of design as unique social events and unrepeatable social products. Regarding the disappearance of the wall-newspaper or the appearance of the human-flags beyond static representations and visual products, through the binocular of indiscipline they are tangible presentations of the “form-act” of design. That is to say, they perform the “form” of design that was specific to the design engagement carried out by those specific participants at that particular time. As such they account how design propagates over time, space and colectivity,¹³¹ for instance, whether set as dynamic of political power play or social coordination. Disclosing the specific aestheticity of design what becomes visible is a shared *ethos* or orientation to design (a common ‘how to’ design) that in both cases became the pattern of the interaction between participants, hence the designing process and experience. In the case with the flags the specific aesthetics of how design is performed is precisely indiscipline. Design is the ongoing performance

130 In chapter 2.2 we can find the notion of forms articulated by Redström, 2013.

131 “The keyword here”, as Thackara (2005, p.99) argues “is minds in the plural – and in particular the innovative capabilities of groups.” The whole case describes a designing process that occurs as “steering more than designing as shaping” (Thackara 2005 p. 214)

and propagation of spatial tensions and compositions that grows and flourishes on the day of the anniversaries.

To give another example, when the trees meet with the artist we can claim DESIGN IS THE SITUATION. Although, DESIGN IS *A DIFFERENT* SITUATION because in visual communication terms what emerges from the encounter between the trees and the artist is not the same displaced moves to design a catalogue, a poster, or another imported form-act of the design discipline. Rather the trees become something to design with or design matter. The form of design in that case is a peculiar one because the pattern through which design is enacted and propagates is captured in the ways participants always take non-design situations for DESIGN SITUATIONS, hence social design spaces of conception and invention where all participants enjoy a sort of parity as co-designers and everything is not just potentially but actually transformative.

In this view, we argue there is a different kind of indiscipline happening when it's the users or receivers of the flags who produce the flags and not the design expert. In Gentes's distinction between "design/conception" and "design/practice" (see chapter 2.3.1), the author points while the former is a practice that is or can be articulated by actors who not need to be design expert, the latter corresponds to the practice of design that is taught in schools and exercised by professionals. The case with the flags introduces a role reversal in this notion. The design expert conceives the flags – departing from the habit in the neighbourhood of using flags for celebration still proposing a different shape and technique – and diffuse designers are the ones who produce the object. At the heart of this role reversal DESIGN IS THE SITUATION. By that it reveals how design expertise is as much a productive capacity as it is an inventive ability. Moreover, how diffuse designers engage design conception as much as they can articulate production without loss of any technical or aesthetic design qualities. This understanding of DESIGN practice is social or relational and entails a critic to both the notion of the designer as author and the notion of designer a producer. If we recall the debate we have raised about the list of formats proposed by the two FTF manifestos (see chapter 2.2.2.3), through this research we see how having a list of objects to project trivialises and restricts different design processes and different design outcomes. The list moulds and conforms the practice of visual communication design to a matter of production, not of conception, furthermore, a practice that happens regardless of where, for and with whom experts or diffuse designers are designing.¹³² Consequentially, it allows to escape a constellation of other imaginative and meaningful DESIGN possibilities from within our expert encounters with others who are not advertising

¹³² Being regardless of "where we are" is to be regardless of the specific and situated encounter between particular persons, objects, knowledges, practices, values, resources, questions we are with, designing or in intention to make things together. In this part, we follow John Thackara's (2005) argument that "actually being there" makes a difference.

and whose problems are not about mass communication or other industrial and commercial purposes. Still, one needs to be very disciplined to experience the form of design propagating on the day of the anniversaries as a form-act of indiscipline. In summary, what we learn from DESIGN IS THE SITUATION as an image of indiscipline is that design is precisely a social form of making. Although, beyond the grasp that all design is social, the indiscipline of design is not only a way of seeing design differently it is to perform design in different social ways. The cases of this research contribute to the understanding that there are under-explored design potentials in taking the social encounter for the design situation. That may be far more valuable for design to expand the form and form-acts of design in relation to where and with whom we are designing, instead of reducing the design act to a process in which the only tension and composition that occurs is based on importing a solution from elsewhere and introduce it into a new context. If the design discipline consisted only in that kind of performance, then there would be no flags and no garden made of gardens to account for different and unique design processes and outcomes pointing to indiscipline as the social space of reinventing the design discipline itself.

4.1.3 The expansion of design in the encounter with others

BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS come to introduce a subtler image of the indiscipline of design. In the engagement with the community of 2 de Maio, BEGINNINGS were moments of indiscipline that performed an expansion of design in the encounter with unexpected others who were not primarily involved in the situation.

Taking place in the middle of the neighbourhood, painting the letters or waiting for the structure of the 3D poster were two events of an ongoing design process that became extraordinary. Through the interferences of the people who did not know precisely what the happenings were about, destabilization actually opened up the design space. Conceiving new possible tensions and compositions from the real form-acts of corporality, spatiality and tonality that were then and there being performed, the people transformed the events into BEGINNINGS. That is to say, they experienced the event of painting or the event of waiting for the structure as ENDS in their own right, instead of being instrumental to accomplish something else, hence already valuable in themselves embodying a wider range of potentially different meanings and future outcomes in the making. Revealing design in its ability to indiscipline itself, through the binocular of indiscipline, BEGINNINGS imply a different politics of designing that comes to complement the notion of indiscipline as a generative practice of design afforded by Gentes. Instead of reflection, the destabilizing and expansive properties of BEGINNINGS are about diffraction-in-action.

As a physics phenomenon, diffraction is both a distortion and the spreading out in multiple directions of something as a result of passing through something else.¹³³ According to Donna Haraway (1992), “[d]iffraction does not produce ‘the same’ displaced, as reflection and refraction do. Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication or reproduction. A diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the effects of difference appear.” (1992, p. 300) Diffraction for the author “trains us to more subtle vision” because it is a process fundamentally grounded “on the processing of small but consequential differences” of the encounter between different things (Haraway, 1992, p. 318)

Considering the encounters with the parents and the people as diffraction, what happens is that each specific design situation of painting or waiting for the structure expands its internal meanings and materiality. As a result of passing through them, the design process that was focused on pursuing a specific END turned momentarily into a BEGGINING. The ways the parents and the people

¹³³ Diffraction accounts the distortion and the spreading out of sound and light when it passes through a narrow aperture or across the edge of an opaque object, which is due to the interference of sound/light with itself. See definition in the Oxford Dictionary (2018).

perceive, experience and conceive of what is happening, furthermore, how they come interact with the specific doings and protagonists, shows first and foremost that diffraction is a phenomenon of visual communication indiscipline.

The happenings were real although not self-explanatory. Visually, painting letters or playing with them in the neighbourhood did not appear as design events nor they referred specifically to the 3D poster as the ultimate telos of what participants were doing. Through a kind of visual under-determination, the happenings became a BEGINNING. For the parents and the people, visual subtraction or incompleteness postulated that all the predominant internal meanings of the situations could, in principle and in practice, be different. By not disclosing the full information about what the physical interplay between real bodies, things and space was about, the happenings were a visual invitation to design. In this sense, visual presence was another plane of designing that occurred in parallel to the process of designing the 3D poster that became visible through the acts of visual representation that the parents and the people engaged through their interactions. For those who were already inside or involved in the doings, diffraction was a destabilization. It caused a momentary distance from the happening to reflect in design actions, roles and modes of practice. Diffraction was a confrontation with ‘ourselves’ in the peculiar way the multiple meanings of what we were doing could potentially transform us. Through abundance, not subtraction, diffraction was an indiscipline. From an insiders’ perspective, under-determination or lack of orientation was caused by an abundance, excess or ecstasy of means-ends relations that flourished through the eyes and actions of the parents and the people. The expansion of BEGINNINGS was not simply to conceive new possible connections with heterogeneous elements, it was to perceive what already existed as potentially different, hence possibly already another thing. Diffraction as a visual co-design interaction affected not only the design space but also the temporal dimension of design. In both situations, diffraction was an experience of “being *in futuro*”¹³⁴ (Kohn, 2013, p. 207). The multiple ways in which the 3D poster was already in the present becoming a reality, turned the situation of waiting for the structure into a BEGINNING. As a form-act of projective abduction, diffraction was the revelation of an expanded landscape of different possibilities for the making and accomplishment of the 3D poster. These possibilities were apparently excluded or unknown, we can speculate, due to the “non-aesthetic” design process that was ongoing. But when the people appeared to grasp design as an “aesthetic” event the future became open. Instead of an action in the continuity of a series of previous actions to materialize something concrete,

134 Drawing from Kohn, “being *in futuro*” means that when the future is brought into the present as an experience it “is not reducible to the cause-and-effect dynamic by which the past affects the present. Signs, as “guesses,” re-present a future possible, and through this mediation they bring the future to bear on the present. The future’s influence on the present has its own kind of reality (see CP 8.330).” (Kohn, 2013, p. 207)

as a kind of “rehearsing the future”,¹³⁵ through the binocular of indiscipline what we see is diffraction bringing about different futures to occur in the now. The existential happening of design was precisely the space to rethink the possibilities of design and its realisation differently. Therefore, the interaction of the parents and the people results in both a destabilization and expansion of the design process as diffraction, and as indiscipline. To give another example, regarding the appearance of the wall-newspapers posted on the walls of Cova da Moura, the situation was a case of diffraction. The presence of the wall-newspaper was a visual appearance that brought the future public space intervention into the present. It made visibly visceral and real the experience of intervention in the present, so we can speculate, it plunged people into a liminal space from which they emerged transformed. The wall-newspaper and other physical installations in the square that transformed the space temporarily were destabilizing physical mediations of the future although simultaneously expansive in the ways these were also visual loci of possibilities. The wall-newspapers and their presence were BEGINNINGS, hence, performing diffraction as an indiscipline.

In sum, by revealing the artificiality of design and its immediate and authentic structures diffracting the attention to multiple kinds of relevant and possibly different meanings, ends and futures, DESIGN IS THE SITUATION that becomes an indiscipline, thus, potentially open to become something else. Diffraction amplifies that it depends on who is looking to see different things happening within the same event of real things and real bodies interacting. By the way the design process scattered into multiple possible directions as a result of passing through the parents and the people, diffraction is the fundamental indiscipline that occurred in BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS.¹³⁶ Destabilization was an opportunity for reflection that happen through diffraction or the generation of many possibilities from within

135 Here we might also refer to an experience of “rehearsing the future” as Halse et al argue (2010). See chapter 2.3.

136 Central to our understanding of the shift that occurs in the quality of design doings between “action” and “comment”, is the distinction between two types of actions in democratic decision making processes made by sociologist Boaventura Sousa Santos (2007): “conformist action” and “action-with-*clinamen*.” Referring to Epicure’s inexplicable “deviation” or “inclination” attributed to Democritus’ atoms, which disturbs the relations between cause and effect, thus revealing the power of spontaneous movement, the author uses Lucretius’ concept of *clinamen* to argue that actions “with-*clinamen*” are not those revolutionary acts or dramatic ruptures, but the slightly deviated actions “whose cumulative effects render possible the complex and creative combinations among atoms, hence also among living beings and social groups.” (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 77) An “action-with-*clinamen*” expands the capacity to interpolate the past in such a way that it becomes generative of possibilities that did not yet have permission to exist and are allowed to swerve in the now as potential emancipatory practices (Sousa Santos 2006; 2007). But “[t]he occurrence of action-with-*clinamen* is in itself inexplicable” according to Sousa Santos and we are only able to “identify the conditions that maximize the probability of such an occurrence and, at the same time, define the horizon of possibilities within which the swerving will “operate.” (Sousa Santos, 2007 p. 77) As opposed to this nonconformist, destabilising, and rebellious action, Sousa Santos argues “[c]onformist action is the routinised, reproductive, repetitive practice which reduces realism to what exists just because it exists.” (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 76)

design, that was precisely not the performance of an END evaluation, mirroring or measuring with an ideal horizon or preconceived goal to be achieved. What is striking about BEGINNINGS is that it's not the appearance of the parents that is the indiscipline, or the difference in the situation that interferes and negotiates with current doings. Instead, it's what 'what' they do does (IT'S ABOUT THE HOW). That is to say, it's not themselves as the offence, but the multiple possibilities, options, hence orientations, they open up that come to question and expand the design space. Indiscipline lies in the sudden appearance of many options and directions of/for change from within the situation, that shows how an extremely complex configuration of realities had been already allowed to escape as design engaged an independent journey to materialize a concrete END.

As the image of indiscipline in this case, to conclude, BEGINNINGS are a form of augmenting the design space by expanding relations and connections with unexpected others and exterior things. But the design power of BEGINNINGS lies in the fact that those diffracted relations and connections are always already, in some way or another, inside the design space, only invisible or partially seen. By affording the expansion of design in the encounter with others then it's the BEGINNINGS NOT ENDS that can provide the very conditions for more rigorous and relevant social designing. Precisely because DESIGN IS THE SITUATION that the parents and the people can invoke or provoke enchanting moments of where to go as a collective social design whole. BEGINNINGS were a slight yet crucial difference in the process of designing the 3D poster highlighting the unique properties of design to move itself beyond its discipline.

4.1.4 The indiscipline of social design

The last engagement of this research is a case of indiscipline where the mediality of design unfolds as communicative socialization in the fullest of its generative potentials. There is no design action performed by individual participants that is not the immediate result of an interaction and consequent social transformation. Indiscipline in this case is literally embodied by participants as they encounter each other, become destabilized and expand themselves through and with each other.

The encounter between the trees and the artist, for instance, not only describes a coming together between them. DESIGN IS THE SITUATION, when through the trees the artist diffracts possibilities for the survival of Quinta da Vitória already then and there. The real event that makes trees visually conspicuous on the verge of survival is precisely what sparks the form of design into practice and turns the trees into artistic matter. The encounter is a BEGINNING with no preconceived ENDS rather many goals flourish. When machines enter in Quinta da Vitória to transplant the trees to another place, then we see how indiscipline is embodied by participants in the ways or HOW they come to think with the trees thoughts, hence, experience themselves designing as trees.¹³⁷

The image of indiscipline that is captured with the insight that DESIGN IS A LIVING THING is an attempt to evidence that the social encounters between participants open up a design space wherein designing is a live interaction performed precisely in socially conjoined ways. In other words, in this design engagement indiscipline implies the ongoing transformation of the design space as it follows the socialization events that brings it into being. Design is precisely an ongoing whole event and space of socialization.

To note, in the process of embodied indiscipline participants do not lose individual autonomy. What happens is that they use their own discipline, habits, conventions and regularities for its own indiscipline or under-determination in socialization with the other. That is how and why DESIGN IS A LIVING THING.

The moment the trees become artistic matter, that is when art uses the artistic for its own under-determination. To counteract a real challenge of survival, the artist plays with disciplinary and institutional norms of art by amplifying all that is artistically significant in the situation. Beyond a 'pure' artistic action or 'pure'

137 Drawing from Kohn and the perspective that: "People, like the Ávila Runa, who enter into and try to harness elements of a complex web of living thoughts are inundated by the logic of living thoughts such that their thoughts about life also come to instantiate some of the unique qualities of living thoughts. They come to think with the forest's thoughts, and, at times, they even experience themselves thinking with the forest's thoughts in ways that reveal some of the sylvan properties of thought itself." (Kohn, 2013, p.100)

political activism the design practice articulates all of them at once in an everyday life way.¹³⁸

To better understand this point of indiscipline where discipline is used for its own under-determination, let us regard the example of the contract. In the continuity of thinking with the trees, the artist drafts a contract to implicate more thoroughly the ward in the project. Through the contract, the ward enters a design space where political and artistic frames are already at play. When the citizens appear in the design situation diffracting dilemmas, beyond accepting the situation the Ward *plays*. DESIGN IS THE SITUATION in the encounter with the citizens who both enjoy the possibility and right to indiscipline, hence to design. Conjoined with the trees and the artist, the ward exercises politics by working through the interference, or indiscipline, of the citizens as a BEGINNING or design space of diffracted opportunities. Projective abduction is not a mechanical clash between heterogeneous participants, but a blurring between everyday life and design. Through the ward, acting as an expanded ‘we’, the project not only survives it is also afforded the possibility to grow well. A purely institutional response towards the contract and the situation with the citizens, would have probably implied completely different design processes and design outcomes. Instead, conjoined with the trees and the artist, what occurs in the encounter and interaction with the citizens is indiscipline. A capacity to undo individual forms and combine them with others developing a collective mode of communication and design. Indiscipline is the emergence of an expanded “who” or social design whole that the ward in action represents without losing its own individual autonomy as an institution or participant, rather *playing*/designing in the fullest of its potential as what it is and simultaneously an embodied indiscipline.

DESIGN IS A LIVING THING, because in this case there are no ‘pure’ design gestures performed by ‘pure’ disciplines. To be clear, when confronted otherness participants forge ways to engage with what is significantly different but that already enriches an otherwise too real and tragic world. In this sense, otherness becomes significant otherness, which is an otherness that is not incommensurable but one which participants are open to be performatively destabilized and recomposed, hence to become another discipline with others spacing appearance

138 This process is similar to when spectators become equal co-subjects of an art performance when they take part in the play and interact with actors, through gestures that beyond artistic, are of the nature of the political and the ethical, and do make art, by confusing it with a social event (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). The play sparks political positions and ethical values, to a point, that such conventions or the symbolic in spectators becomes open, diffracted in the ways it can potentially become transformed. This is the liminal situation described by Fischer-Lichte afforded by performance that plunges participants into a crisis, from which they can either respond through conventional gestures or gestures of other kind. The response itself, as an act of materialization, is about taking part in performance, hence it is a real and authentic transformation of spectators into actors that happens not in spite of art but because of art. Therefore, it uses art for its own under-determination or indiscipline.

of a whole different social form of designing with others.¹³⁹ DESIGN IS A LIVING THING makes explicit indiscipline as a practice self-othering or self-indiscipline. What emerges in the design space are only design gestures that are conscious or unconsciously social expansions of the individual bodies, things or disciplines participating.¹⁴⁰ For instance, the trees expand their bodies through the artist who takes responsibility for them, hence become with them in ways that mark the situation – the trees are the main artistic pieces in the collection – and come to infect others to become transformed as well.

The contract that appeared as non-design gesture or a gesture to end design by giving the collection away to the management of the ward, was actually the BEGINNING of the project in another form. A form of design that is social and recognizes the ward as co-designer. The act of formally recognizing a participant who was already a stakeholder in the project, although only partially seen (because it was only instrumental for design), amplified or dramatized their role as extraordinary in designing the artistic collection. We may argue that in an “oblique” way, the contract maintained and reinforced a hierarchical relation that was already allowed in and inside design, but it did so by simultaneously in a “direct” way state that the ward was standing as equal to the artist in designing the collection. The contract was a BEGINNING that diffracted the meanings and impacts of their participation, hence it opened up the landscape of possibilities for what participants might do next. When the artist drafts the contract and when the Ward encounters the contract, we can speculate, both situations implied for participants ethical and unethical questions in regard to the norms and rules of their own specific institutions and disciplines. Still, instead of turning to their individual sides, taking something away from the situation to design on their own terms and regimes, both participants emphasise the relationship of design they share and steer the process in that direction. The politics of the contract as a BEGINNING, empowered the ward to take action in radically different ways or at least opened up that possibility. As a case of indiscipline, the appearance of the contract emphasises everyday life as a design space where playing with meanings, materials, means and morals of everyday life as matter to design with matters for designing different social worlds, processes and products.

The image of indiscipline implied in DESIGN IS A LIVING THING is a form of design in which participants always interact from the presumption of a constitutive and inclusive sociality, instead of presuming individual acts of materialization as an exclusive disciplined performance. Facing unexpected challenges, participants

139 In the line of thought of Kohn, 2013; Butler and Athanasiou, 2013.

140 Recalling the performance *Lips of Thomas* by Marina Abramovich described by Fischer-Lichte (2008, p. 11-23), this way of behaving is precisely how spectators intervened towards the artist entering the play as actors wherein the quality of their actions was not precisely artistic but ethically engaged.

turn everything into a potential BEGINNING. Confronted with otherness, participants diffract multiple significant possibilities already within the things they are doing and the meanings and materials they are seeing in front of them. Therefore, visualizing the potentials rather than solely the constraints, the form-act of design is not only social, but socially engaged, in the ways' bodies, things and morals embody indiscipline in the fullest of its destabilizing and expansive design possibilities. Showing how the design discipline is not a pure knowledge or independent ability, rather it is the becoming of the connection between different knowledges and abilities – as a kind of social glue – the case with the flags is another design engagement wherein DESIGN IS A LIVING THING. The form of design propagates through and as everyday life in the neighbourhood as more and more paper, chopsticks and humans meet each other, socialize and infect others to do the same.

In summary, this was the case of indiscipline where more explicitly the social is a condition not a choice. The generation of materiality and meaning in design is performative, in the sense, it is a social conception articulated in the live encounters between participants through the ways participants immediately and authentically meet each other and become transformed by each other. This is not a case of importing solutions or preconceived form-acts from elsewhere, everything thing emerges in relation to the everything else that is happening, that is present, and that appears and disappears. Even the identity tags which are a medium to specifically space the appearance of the trees as the trees of Quinta da Vitória, become one of the foundations for the ongoing transformation of Quinta da Vitória into a garden made of gardens. The trees are the same trees displaced from a previous context into another, although they are not something which can stand positively in itself. They become an END without the identity tags. Designing the garden made of gardens is a transformative process which is not separate from how participants transform each other and become another with one another on an everyday basis in the garden made of gardens. To conclude, DESIGN IS A LIVING THING hopefully makes visible the idea that to become social is not the end of design or to find ourselves without a discipline. Rather design becomes EVEN MORE LIVING as an indiscipline whose agency, power and abilities are expanded, and unexpected potentials appear.

4.2 The beginning of social design: moves to indiscipline

That all design is social although not all design is social design is the matter of this thesis. Setting off to research a set of cases, in which some configure normal design situations and others represent the social turn as designers choose to address more complex challenges, indiscipline was experienced as a transition. Common to all cases was an orientation to involve the users or stakeholders in the specific design processes to co-design some things together with design experts. But as we can see in the [Diagram 12](#) indiscipline occurs, in our view through the binocular, precisely when the social condition of design turns into a co-design situation that is beyond the choice or control of design experts.

As we have accounted in the disappearance of the wall-newspapers or the appearance of the parents, indiscipline was a move that destabilized design practice. Unexpected things emerged within a normal design situation, for instance, when the people used the wall-newspaper in a different way, or when the parents suddenly assigned new meanings to the event of painting the letters. Both actions gained the status of co-design gestures because, in the first example, they implied not the expected end of the design process – because participants were in use-time – but the continuity of the design process – in project-time – albeit performed in different social terms. Indiscipline was a transition from the situation of receiving an artefact to engaging the artefact as a means to keep the communicative process of design production going. In the second example, because by reading the normal design process that was happening in the middle of the neighbourhood the parents began to widen its scope and impacts deriving meanings and materiality that were already there although not yet seen or *used*. Indiscipline was the transition from a normal state to a social situation beyond the choice or control of the design experts where production and reception occurred at the same time and the figures of both users and producers collapsed. Both examples of destabilization emerged through the spatial projective abduction of bodies and things that characterizes the practice of design as always and already conditioned on social exchange. In the process of design, they provoked tensions and compositions of dichotomies between subjects and objects, insiders and outsiders, makers and participants, reception and production, design and everyday life. More complex than conventional designing, as cases of indiscipline these two episodes marked a transition to social design by revealing the infrastructural politics behind the normal design practice, which was how they simultaneously generated an expansion of design opening up opportunities for moving the practice to become another thing.

Indiscipline manifested more explicitly as a move to expand when there was already an ongoing movement towards a wholly diffuse and uncertain event as if participants were suddenly found outside the design space without a discipline. The process of producing the flags or the whole case with the trees account cases where tensions and compositions turned into improbable patterns of becoming another with another or making something common. In these already social situations, indiscipline did not mark a social turn rather it represented individual transformations to become equal co-designer in the situation of socialization. The uncontrollable character of design emerged through the ways in which everything and everyone could directly influence the design process beyond any conventional or oblique hierarchies, roles or rules to act, through actions that simultaneously self-referred what was happening more immediately and authentically and added something of their own. When the wall-newspaper becomes alive or the when taking pictures with the letters is an act of designing new versions of the 3D poster are also examples of actions that represent human and nonhuman participants actually taking part in the design process in parity to all the others without losing their autonomy. These kinds of individual indiscipline, as we have experienced, sustain the social design situation to propagate as an autopoietic self-organizing system, in other words, as a design space that is open to the appearance of unexpected things with which the situation can grow and participants productively do something with. To view indiscipline as the threshold towards socially engaged practices, in expansion what happens is a shift in the politics of co-design. Designers no longer need to involve or motivate others to enter the design situation and participate, what happens is a decision to act and be included that paradoxically happens again through the fact that design is constituted through and contingent on social interactions at its basic form and form-act. To clarify, in destabilization, indiscipline is something that happens to design when it becomes social. By that destabilization is the clash between the social condition and the expected/normal practice of design in which indiscipline occurs to move it beyond itself towards social design. In expansion, because design is already exposed to the participation of others to intervene within it, indiscipline is precisely the transformation of the “where” and “who” of design that is argued by authors¹⁴¹ and an opening up of the question of ‘how to’ design as we argued through the binocular. If we recall the crucial turning point of this research, this transformation and question were what the students were trying to explain. That design is a living thing but to be engaged in designing with others as a real intentional social design situation, the practice becomes an even more living thing. Addressing the gap on ‘how to’ collaborate and lack of depth about the shifting politics of social design, in our view, the problem that needs addressing is the tension between articulating the social as a choice

141 Mazé, 2014. See outline.

when the social is already a condition of design. In other words, while difficulties, uncertainty and value conflicts¹⁴² evidence that all design is always and already a social activity the fact that there are indeed transformations in the ‘how’ of designing when it becomes socially engaged holds implicit the need to revisit what delimits and defines design practice in its micro and macro political dimensions. Difficulties are signs that not all design is ‘social design’ when the practice, the discipline or the work does not become transformed by the encounter with others. One of the challenges we have also tried to discuss in the analysis of the cases is how to remain in this expansive generative state. Discussing indiscipline as the shift or transition in the politics of design, whether it happens as the threshold between normal design and social design or between co-design and unexpected social forms of designing, the transformation of where and who demonstrates the need to establish different limits or boundaries for the design process and different criteria to ascertain the form-acts of design outcomes.

Drawing from the cases, shifting the “where” occurred as an experience of expansion of the design event. As the ERC project demonstrates, design interactions between participants continued at a distance. In different places participants were designing separately although contributing to the same design space. That is to say, all participants designed in the absence of each other, because design interactions extended in time through the feedback loop that continued wherever all participants were located and whenever they implied the others in/with their actions. This is different than the normal design situation where design experts make things in the absence of clients who are waiting for something to appear. In this scenario, it is expected that the expert is the only one who is performing design while the client is engaged (and may emerge as a figure in the designers’ mind) although not precisely or physically in action. Besides an extension of interactions, in the case with the flags the expansion of “where” occurs as an extension of the temporality of the design process to continuously generate materiality and meanings in time. The “where” expanded through paper, glue and chopsticks that stayed in the neighbourhood but travelled with the people in space and in time. This expansion of the temporality of the design space was also seen in the case with the letters when design became a plural space where past, present and future meet. Here, the design space grew as a diffracted space of possibilities which demonstrates one way in which the “where” can grow is through under-determination. The visual under-determination of the event of painting or waiting for the structure, as we have seen, open up a design space spacing appearance of new meanings and materiality already embedded within the infrastructure of related bodies and things – as an indiscipline within.

¹⁴² In the framing of design as reflective practice, Donald Schön (1988, p. 14) argued that design always occurs under conditions of uncertainty and value conflicts.

Drawing from the cases, shifting the “who” was an experienced of expanding agency through others, as literally the events of becoming another with another or becoming whole or attached into new kinds of ‘we’. The case with the letters accounts two moments when precisely the “who” of design grows to integrate ‘outsiders’ in the established design situation when through them the “where” expanded its possibilities in ways that made a difference for what was happening. In the case with the trees, the complex flows between participants become the basis for a complex ecology of co-design to propagate and flourish. The episodes of thinking with the trees demonstrate how participants become together without losing their autonomy or agency as individuals and as disciplines rather they are able to expand abilities and power with and through others turning into a kind of ‘we’ who designs and accomplishes things more powerfully. The case with the flags is also a relevant case to account the expansion of “who” as more and more humans enter the design space to design a whole contagious event of celebration. This case is also striking because it reveals one way in which the “who” can grow is through an aesthetic condensation of basic form-acts, for instance, the human-flag that propagates and grows as a form or pattern of interaction. The same can be claimed about the wall-newspaper which gained the status of a “who” which influences the situation not only because it represented the researchers but because it reproduced the pattern of their actions. By communicating ‘this is an intervention’ the wall-newspapers teased people to intervene as well.

These different politics of design and socially engaged designing generate for us three main implications for the design discipline we wish to discuss in regards to the historical and contemporary ideas and debates about the social in design that form the background of this thesis. The first is that an expanded where and who of design turns the role of the design expert into an open question. This research evidences that practitioners are not found without discipline, rather the role design expertise is to be crafted in situation and cannot be preconceived.¹⁴³ The need to transform the habitual ways of design, we argue, happens not because the conventional things design experts do are wrong but because the situation appeals to different expressions of the design ability beyond the different professional domains and disciplines of design practice.¹⁴⁴ The second implication is that the outcomes of design are also generated through the situation as the things with which we can map the interferences and the degrees of destabilization between participants.¹⁴⁵ The third, which summarizes the previous two, is the recognition that by transforming the politics of design the indiscipline of design seen as a

143 This is a discussion led by Manzini, 2015. See outline.

144 Cross, 2011; Bremmer and Rodgers, 2013; see outline.

145 This matter addresses directly the questions raised with Koskinen and Hush, 2016. See outline.

transition or a move towards the social implies a shift in the ethics of designing. In the next few sections we explore these three implications more in depth, to conclude this research and point to possible contributions to knowledge.

4.2.1 Relational roles, not prescribed roles

The reason we claim the designer's role in co-design is a relational role not a prescribed role is because the 'how to' design always turns into an open question. In situations that entail the participation of others as co-designers, the feedback loop or the self-organizing situation generates an epistemological shift¹⁴⁶ that foregrounds the design discipline need to transform itself.

Recalling the first case, the ERC project revealed precisely the need for the discipline to move beyond conventional habits and modes of action when acts of indiscipline marked a transition from design to co-design. When the researchers were present in the neighbourhood to design with the people and instead their actions and gestures re-casted the community as receivers, rather than co-designers, the conventional design practice operated as a destabilization of the co-design event. Taking diffuse design for non-design responses gestured after design proposals made by experts, the disappearance of the wall-newspaper as indiscipline opened up something unfamiliar and unexpected. An explicit violent gesture that beyond its immediate and authentic character signalled the possibility that diffuse designers were in fact co-designing. The gesture was a physical articulation of a role reversal that made visible an ongoing feedback loop of simultaneous design production and reception between participants. To miss the 'how to' co-design and solely focus on the 'how of' design plunged participants into the tangle of "solutionism" and "participatorianism" where either group dominated or completely disappeared in the design space.¹⁴⁷ Paying attention to the ways in which the two groups of participants approached each other, hence, approached designing with one another, IT'S ABOUT THE HOW was our conclusion that becoming socially engaged is to depart from the social as a source and chance to be moved, to be affected and to be prompted to design¹⁴⁸

146 Bremner and Rodgers, 2013. See Outline.

147 These two concepts are developed by Manzini (2015, 2016). See outline.

148 "Dispossession" is a notion examined by Athena Athanasiou in a conversation with Judith Butler (2013) to refer the processes, ideologies and "ways we are performatively constituted and de-constituted by and through our relations to others among whom we live, as well as by and through particular regulatory norms that secure cultural intelligibility" (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 92) In this view, drawing from the premise that "Dispossession entails the different and differential manner in which the anxieties and the excitements of relationality are socially distributed" (Ibidem), the authors articulate that "[b]eing dispossessed by the other (in other words, being disposed to be undone in relation to others) is simultaneously a source of anxiety and a chance "to be moved" – to be affected and to be prompted to act – isn't it?" (*Ibid*, p. 93)

in ways that do not precede the social encounter but actually do justice to the unique specificities of where we are and with whom/which we are designing with. Revisiting the expansion of “where” that occurs when design is socially engaged to others, the disappearance of the wall-newspaper made explicit that the absence of the design experts did not suspend the design actions when through the presence of the wall-newspapers the people continued to design. In this view, the diffuse designers were in fact co-designing because despite avowing an individual stake on the matter their actions always presumed the social space that was shared/engaged with the experts. The ERC project evidences that beyond discovering what others need or want to help us find a role as design experts in a situation, it would have been crucial if the researchers did the same. That is to say, it would have made a difference for the design engagement if the design experts transformed how they addressed the other participants who were in fact co-subjects of design and not only or mainly receivers waiting as a client. The difficulties of becoming socially engaged experienced by the researchers were due to an internal struggle to maintain the boundaries of the design discipline understood as an individual act of knowledge over lack of expertise¹⁴⁹. Their behaviour propagated an attitude and form-act of absolute otherness, irreducible difference or incommensurability¹⁵⁰ that infected the people to do the same. The acts of knowledge performed by the researchers in the ERC project presumed an expert capability to design public space interventions overriding the abilities of the people who had built their

149 In settings where different knowledge practices interact to make things together, the sociologist Boaventura Sousa Santos (2007, p. 69) argues that: “Forms of ignorance are as heterogeneous and interdependent as forms of knowledge. Given this interdependence, learning certain forms of knowledge may involve forgetting others and, in the last instance, becoming ignorant of them. In other words, in the ecology of knowledges, ignorance is not necessarily the original state or starting point. It may be a point of arrival. It may be the result of the forgetting or unlearning implicit in the reciprocal learning process. Thus, in a learning process governed by the ecology of knowledges, it is crucial to compare the knowledge that is being learned with the knowledge that is thereby being forgotten or unlearned. Ignorance is only a disqualifying condition when what is being learned is more valuable than what is being forgotten. The utopia of interknowledge is learning other knowledges without forgetting one’s own.” In this view, Sousa Santos argues that in situations where knowledge acts as a regulation “[i]gnorance was then conceived as chaos and knowledge as order” (Sousa Santos 2007, p. 143). As the author argues, “modern epistemology, which is based on a trajectory from a point of ignorance, conceived as chaos, towards a point of knowledge, conceived as order (knowledge-as-regulation)” (Sousa Santos, 1998, p. 45). It is linked with a framework of action that conforms or “reduces realism to what exists” by imposing a state of anxiety and insecurity that “prevents, trivialises and restricts processes of democratic deliberation” (Sousa Santos, 1998, p. 47). In turn, in situations where knowledge is emancipatory, seeing “the point of ignorance as colonialism and the point of knowledge as solidarity” (Sousa Santos, 1998, p. 44) are linked with a “destabilising” framework in which a turbulent and spontaneous mode of action and thinking allows the redistribution of anxieties and insecurities among the ecology, thereby avoiding rigid (“abyssal”) boundaries and promoting space-times of democratic deliberation (Sousa Santos, 1998, pp. 45-46). Distinct forms of knowledge are no longer distinct but continuous with each other as solidary extensions of each other which enable an ecology of interchange and collective transformation.

150 Kohn, 2013, p. 86

own houses, hence the neighbourhood. In turn, the people presumed an expert knowledge on matters of everyday life upholding the capability to dispossess¹⁵¹ any claims of social responsibility and public issues in the public space. In this case, the design situation was asking for something else on the part of the design experts who had decided to engage people in a design process in the first place.

But when knowledge is treated as an extension or complement, rather than crude destabilization, not knowing becomes a precondition to design. The improbable encounters with the people in 2 de Maio were evidence that not knowing and visual under-determination can turn an exclusive design situation into an open design space that literally starts to connect and involve different things without expecting something precise to happen, instead just expecting to see what happens. To give another example, confusion and awareness of one's own disciplinary limits were the preconditions to stand in front of a tree and instead of immediately wanting to make a catalogue or a poster actually furthered the action of transplanting the trees to another place to make garden. Under-determination in all is form-acts of confusion, incompleteness, excess of stimuli, mess, lack of knowledge or ignorance functioned in our design engagements as a design space¹⁵². Instead of situations when practitioners find themselves destabilized or without discipline, through the binocular of indiscipline we were able to grasp these experiences as expressions of indiscipline when the discipline becomes open to be transformed or performed in different, unknown or unexpected ways.

The need for the discipline to transform itself or when the situation asks for something else, also foregrounds a shift in the medial conditions of design. Participants are no longer obliquely or hierarchically connected but directly involved. They form a pair of co-subjects interacting on the same plane of design. Therefore, design as a practice is no longer conditioned by the performance of the expert to take the lead on the situation, rather the mediality of design lies in social interaction. Design is social because the design space depends on an ongoing autopoietic feedback loop where production and reception are simultaneous activities – a live conception – in contrast with the conventional design discipline which separates production and reception into two sequential steps of the design process assigned to different groups of participants.

The second case with the flags evidenced, in complement to the ERC project, that

151 “Dispossession” is a concept examined by Athena Athanasiou in a conversation with Judith Butler (2013). In general, the term refers the “processes and ideologies by which persons are disowned and abjected by normative and normalizing powers that define cultural intelligibility and that regulate the distribution of vulnerability” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 2). It describes “ways we are performatively constituted and de-constituted by and through our relations to others among whom we live, as well as by and through particular regulatory norms that secure cultural intelligibility” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 92)

152 This is a point made with Gentes (2017) that we also learned with TRADERS and CODE specifically about participatory and co-design practices. See outline.

whether in the form of social coordination or in the form of social destabilization the danger and hope of any kind of transformation lies in the medial conditions of design as always and already a social event. That is to say, to be able to transform things into preferred ones it can only happen through the interactions that bring design into being as a space and activity which humans and nonhumans are doing together in relation to each other.

That design is always the matter of a social relationship, and that others perceive and represent design and can commission design, is not new for designers. But we have not let it transform the ways we do actually design. Recognizing the social as a condition, especially when the social turn is a choice, changes what it means to design. When we inadvertently impose conventional oblique hierarchical relationships by using figures of users instead of relying on their real actions or having them wait for us to bring something instead of making things in real interaction, that is when miss the opportunities to expand our discipline.

When design practitioners began to question the morals of industry and commerce therein was the possibility to distance ourselves from not paying enough attention to the social as a condition and to reflect on possible modes of future conduct that we can deem potentially better or worse for others and ourselves. The social turn that occurred approximately around the 1970s as a co-design turn, afforded beyond utopian or ideological visions a critical view of how the service orientation of design invariably suggests a kind of 'we', who is and is not implicated in design, and in what ways do the logics of others (diffuse designers with whom design experts engage) work their ways through design without sacrificing design as a discipline in its own right.

The case with the flags questioned precisely the 'we' of design as a fixed relationship when beyond a feedback loop it established a process carried mainly through a growing web of diffuse designers. The diffuse propagation and infection of passing along materials and making flags set different boundaries for the designing process when in use-time DESIGN WAS *still* THE SITUATION. On the day of the anniversaries, the event of celebration is a whole social design event made visible and coherent through the form-act or pattern of interferences between participants to design more and more human-flags. The case evidenced how design is an indiscipline because socialization or to become social is precisely a design gesture.

While concerned with the affirmation and establishment of design as a discipline (with distinct designerly ways of being, knowing and making), we may speculate that one of the reasons behind the historical turn to the social might have been because we have lost precisely our attention to how socialization is a space, a situation, a world, a performance and a gesture of design. That is to say, of invention beyond instrumentality. Furthermore, whether continuously dismissing

research for non-design might have turned collaboration, or the co-design space of socialization, into a field of tensions that remains fairly unknown, as contemporary discourse articulates, in its most integral and particular designerly dimensions.

To give another example, when unexpected others come to apparently destabilize the process of designing the 3D poster in the middle of the 2 de Maio neighbourhood, the exchanges that took place between the protagonists demonstrate how the social is not a space that lies outside the design space waiting to become involved, rather socialization is constitutive of design. One needs to be very disciplined to see how that moment was the BEGINNING of design performed anew if it integrated the parents or the people in the “who” of designing. The two happenings evidenced that it would have been possible to design something out of the presence of unexpected bodies (the parents) and the absence of expected things (the iron structure), because the events themselves as ENDS were not disconnected from the relationships of corporality, spatiality, tonality and temporality that brought them into being as a reality and as design events. Becoming together integrated into new configurations of “where” and “who” accounts the transformative power of the social encounter with others to afford or constraint the design possibilities and chances to make things differently. By rethinking interferences beyond destabilization and take them for design interactions, the situations became material for possible and potential expansions of meaning and materiality equally valuable, possible and present, hence for different or new design compositions to become designed. Instead of convergence, it’s the expansion of design that happens in the encounter with others. Indiscipline beyond destabilization was an opening to different practices in prototypical enactment already there, made possible and potentially real within the medial conditions of design.

These slight yet crucial differences between the conventional form of design and the co-design form, made clear how social design is a process of negotiating and establishing new literacies and common languages between different groups who design differently from the outset. These literacies and languages are not fixed nor stable but grow and shift through the destabilizations and poetic effort between participants to design something together¹⁵³. DESIGN IS THE SITUATION, we concluded, because it is precisely through the social interactions that design can invoke or provoke different or more relevant, interesting, exciting, enchanting moments of where to go, roles to perform and things to do.

4.2.2 Degrees of engagement: the depth of indiscipline

Comparing both experiences of working with the same public, the ERC project

153 (Gentes, 2017, p. 236)

and the case with the flags, demonstrate how design processes are always unique and unrepeatable social design events. Furthermore crucial, both cases also demonstrate that even when socialization is instrumental to achieve another thing (something different than the journey itself, as non-aesthetic performances) it's HOW socialization unfolds that determines 'what' outcomes and outputs of design emerge. The way designing unfolds in the ERC project through social tensions that generate further social tensions accomplished nothing in the Largo. In turn, the way designing unfolds through the appearance of human-flags ends up accomplishing more and more human-flags in the neighbourhood. Both cases account design processes generated through specific design engagements and how a specific design outcome emerges predicated in gestures and actions as a "form-act" of how participants meet each other socially in design beyond individual emotional or political motivations. The ending of the two cases foreground how different communicative processes of design accomplish or unfold to flourish different design results particular to their social design encounters. From this perspective, outcomes of socially engaged design are, or should be, considered those things that reveal more immediately and authentically the social processes that gave rise to them. Just like the traces of performance after its conclusion, these outcomes that reveal the social are the outcomes that materialize design as an indiscipline. In other words, these are the things that account for a transformation of design in the encounter with others, hence, design emerging anew as an indiscipline (not the end of discipline).

The debate about the outcomes of social design is crucial and we need new conceptual and practical tools to perceive and represent them¹⁵⁴. Otherwise, if we continue to look for recognizable expressions of the discipline how can we account for the ways in which designers engage with the realities they encounter? Looking at the flag as a design outcome, what evidences that flags were in reality produced by the diffuse designers who carry them? What demonstrates that more important than the flags as an output, it was the paper, glue and chopsticks that engaged a growing web of humans in making ideas intelligible for themselves and others? If not in the outcome of design what else can evidence that designers can actually empathise or become "infected" by the realities and situations where they work, if the gestures and materialities of design are not transformed by working specifically with and for those whom they encounter? Recalling the motivations of the researchers in the previous ERC project, how can the genesis of the work alone reveal differences in practice, when there is no trace to even prove our presence in the neighbourhood or in Largo?

This research demonstrates that the HOW of designing is a feature that enables to differentiate between design practices that are always already social and the

154 Recalling the debates raised with Koskinen and Hush, 2016. See outline.

practices in which the social turn is a focused choice.

The first aspect we wish to point is that the latter poses a critic to conventional design by raising questions on the lines of: if design was not grounded on social relationships at its core, there would be hardly a need to involve non-designers (users, citizens, experts of their own discipline or experience) because design would be a discipline practiced only for designers' sake. If sameness always prevailed¹⁵⁵, there would hardly be a need for the complex and endless process of building common languages and literacies with others, because posters, leaflets, signs for streets or marketing campaigns would always achieve the same 'pure' results and could be used interchangeably regardless of situated or contextual circumstances. The episode with the wall-newspaper is exemplary. What would be the point of using an emblematic visual communication design output, a poster, in a new context if we missed all the crucial interactions that made the appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspaper possible and relevant for the design situation? What would be the point to pay attention to the social, if the non-designers did not respond to the things we do with shock, bewilder and surprise, through reiterated gestures that whistle a relational and shared design situation?

To give a more thorough example, performing a conventional design process in the middle of a neighbourhood generated a friction between what the normal design journey was about and what it could potentially be or become. The encounter with unexpected others intervened with the social conditions of design to question the morals, motivations and politics behind it. The case with the 3D poster and the events that happened in the neighbourhood with letters, but also the case with the wall-newspaper, the flags, or even what happened with the trees when they became artistic matter, all these episodes evidenced that besides "images" it's also through the 'objects' that the visual and static notion of form still propagates in design¹⁵⁶. By objects we refer the concrete, discrete or explicit design outputs through which design experts formally state 'this is *not* design'. Within the visual communication discipline these are the catalogues, posters, signs for streets, magazines, logotypes, campaigns, and so on, which have propagated as the form or pattern of visual communication design practices¹⁵⁷.

Recalling the discussion about the two First Things First manifestos, we may argue that advertising form-acts are "useful" because they were emergent things in service of a specific context or sector therefore relevant in the context where they operate. They are "lasting" because as objects they were able to capture the visual thingness and integrate it into a form that is able to propagate as a pattern in time

155 Paraphrasing Haraway, from the original: "[t]here is hardly a need for affinity groups and their endless process if sameness prevailed." (Haraway, 1992, p. 318)

156 This is a debate raised by Redström, 2013. See Outline.

157 See discussion of the two First Things First manifestos in the outline.

and space. And finally, “democratic” because they are tools of communication that reach the masses beyond social or economic status. In this view, they are useful, lasting and democratic design form-acts that all visual communication designers carry in their design tool-box.

Still, suggesting that knowing about advertising form-acts as if how to make catalogues, signs for streets, books, campaigns, posters... is to have a discipline, misses out precisely on the very locus of “where” and “who” design happens. In the discourse of both manifestos it appears as if more important than what is designed and how in visual communication design terms with a community, an education centre, a culture event or political setting, it’s whether those doings and outcomes fit within the rules of reproducing advertising form-acts understood as the discipline of visual communication design. Signs for streets, books, periodicals, instructional manuals, digital marketing campaigns... emerged with respect to a history that will always signal our visual communication design orientation. While this treasury of devices, techniques, ideas, procedures and so on¹⁵⁸ can point to the ‘how of’ design as in what consists our ability and kinds of design decisions we take, they do not describe or explain the ‘how to’ practice and discipline of visual communication design. Among the many cultural inventions of graphic design these can only constitute or help to constitute a form-act (in Redström’s sense, a point of view, an attitude of orientation, a kind of perception and expression of the design ability) but never a form of how visual designers work (in Kohn’s sense, of a pattern or way of acting design). If what we do and the ways we design stem from the past without any kind of indiscipline, converging repeatedly to sameness uncritically, is to miss precisely but what means to design.

One needs to be very disciplined to become critically aware of how a poster, such as the wall-newspaper, casts its users as passive consumers and be able to see that by having such a thing posted on the walls of the neighbourhood worked as an intervention. Two aspects were crucial here. The first, we were only able to draw this insight only after the event had happened. While we experienced the event ‘live’ we enveloped in the habit of seeing the poster as a harmful thing precisely because it implies a static form-act of communication based solely on the appearance of things and not on their physical presence. When the poster disappears, it suddenly claims a life of its own gaining another meaning as an active matter in the design situation turning into a conversation device between participants. Because this discussion is about the transition from the normal practice of design towards the social design practice, it is important to note as well that what makes the poster alive is the physical and visual atmosphere of being

¹⁵⁸ Here we are drawing from Foucault: “[a]mong the cultural inventions of mankind there is a treasury of devices, techniques, ideas, procedures, and so on, that cannot exactly be reactivated, but at least constitute, or help to constitute, a certain point of view which can be very useful as a tool for analyzing what ‘s going on now--and to change it.” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982, p. 236)

posted on the walls of the neighbourhood and what activates it is a human gesture. It is always a social relationship with something else that *designs* the space where things can happen and become possible or impossible to be designed.

These are the reasons a poster became such an important indiscipline beyond a normal graphic design output. This is because the outcome of design was not itself as a thing but the event of its disappearance.

If design needs indiscipline to be socially constituted and indiscipline captures the aesthetics of design as a social space and experience, then indiscipline does not mean the dissolution of disciplines including design. The specific “aestheticity” of design as an indiscipline does not mean the end of design or becoming undisciplined. If destabilization and expansion are the manners in which design works as a discipline, to be critical about social design means that indiscipline is not the measure of difference by its degree of anti-disciplinarity. Rather, the moves or movements of HOW the social works its way through, wrap around and entwines design, and vice versa. For instance, how paper and chopsticks became with and through humans, and how humans became with and through paper and chopsticks. The indiscipline of design is the encounter and tensions (the transformative process) but also the more coherent and explicit forms and form-acts of collective interference (the products of transformations) that emerge. Therefore, indiscipline is about moves and represents the movements, ways and manners of how *weakly, strongly and/or radically*¹⁵⁹ design interferes with and in the reality of another, preventing or affording possibilities for response, and how that another and her world already *weakly, strongly and/or radically* interferes or not with what the collective is doing or proposing, preventing or affording the ‘we’ an opening or closure¹⁶⁰. The ways how *weakly, strongly and/or radically* different become the outcomes and products of design, as how *weakly, strongly and/or radically* can they tell about the patterns and social forms of design behind them. Through the binocular of indiscipline, we may argue that when design is only a matter of modifying pre-existing design solutions in relation to a new problematic that corresponds to the *weak* move to indiscipline. The way the social works its way through design is an interference in visual appearance or in the content of preconceived things that does not introduce any real destabilization or expansion

159 Here we are drawing from Fischer-Lichte and her account of three types of “presentness” of actors in performance: from “the weak concept of presence” and the sheer actors’ representation of a character, “the strong concept of presence” wherein actors command space and hold the spectators’ attention, to “the radical concept of presence” that accounts situations wherein spectators are involved in performance interacting directly with actors. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 94-99) See chapter 2.4.

160 Drawing from Keshavarz (2016, p. 362), indiscipline is about the ways “design and designing make the world possible, and more importantly, impossible through the articulation and sustenance of particular frames, devices, interfaces and performances of artefacts and artefactual relations.”

beyond an effect of transformation. What happens is a reproduction of form-acts imported from one context to another. That is for instance the making of the wall-newspaper.

When designing becomes a practice of making mixtures and mutual transformations between bodies, things and phenomena, indiscipline is a *strong* move. When the wall-newspapers disappear or similar to what we have experienced in the case with the flags, this is when the conventional discipline need to transform itself emerges because the situation is asking for something else on the part of design experts. Following through the discussion that designers should be recognised for what they do and themselves recognise a designers' role in complex situations¹⁶¹, still indiscipline as a *strong* practice requires us to acknowledge the social part of design. Crafting what design can do for others, especially when we are designing with them, requires us to be able to grasp the medial conditions of design as a co-design event contingent on social interactions set within a feedback loop space where production and reception occur at the same time.

When designing becomes a *radical* questioning of the 'how to' design by the ways in which others, non-designers, destabilize but also engage in composing, determining and advancing the social and communicative design situation, that is what we can grasp design as social design. A *radical* move to indiscipline happens when designing does not aim to settle into a regime¹⁶² rather it is indiscipline which propagates in effortless efficacy through the ways participants use their disciplines for unexpected, or better, socially engaged moves.

What we experienced in the case of the trees precisely was that conceiving 'what to project' does not necessarily come prior to an encounter with others. Instead, it was by being in constant interference that design revealed affordances and possibilities for invention. As we have seen, beyond accepting the terms of reality, participants in the case with the trees play/design through the problematics. Rather than shaping pre-existing form-acts or steering the practice into a regime of action, design is an ongoing expansion of the "where" and "who" of designing — as a living thing — by the moves each "I" makes to design differently through an attention to (and thinking with) the other "I's". The encounter for instance between the artist, the trees, the ward, etc... becomes revealed and constituted as design not because participants have pre-conceived goals or instrumental reasons for encountering each other. The situation becomes design in the moments when encountering

161 This the discussion lead by Manzini, 2015; 2016. See outline.

162 Drawing from Butler and Athanasiou, "[t]he point is not to institute new forms of intelligibility that become the basis of self-recognition. But neither is the point to celebrate unintelligibility as its own goal. The point, rather, is to move forward, awkwardly, with others, in a movement that demands both courage and critical practices, a form of relating to norms and to others that does not "settle" into a new regime." (Butler and Athanasiou, p.68)

each other they come *to design* together in communication to each other¹⁶³. The way participants bring design into being is not categorically different from how they communicate with each other so the “where” and “who” of design grow by association. Communication, in this case, can be understood as the foundational condition that inaugurates design and the constitutes design as an expanded social design process. Communication is not an outcome nor it is merely instrumental to achieve a clear definite design goal. Instead, communication happens prior to design in its the original etymological meaning, from the latin *communicare* “to share, exchange, to make common”, from the word *communis*, as it refers to how design practice is not pre-given but unfolds as an ongoing social achievement of real encounters between diverse participants that through how they communicate achieve a becoming together in design. To clarify, standing in the middle of destruction, the trees as another inhabitant of the neighbourhood will eventually disappear as well. It’s their imminent termination and the fact of the irreversible finitude of Quinta da Vitória that communicates at once a disturbing situation and the opening of a design space. When the trees appeared in the new garden that was another invitation to design that projected the appearance of identity tags as possible means to discern among different trees which ones are different. Design happens not only through the ways in which participants represent and relate to each other, but how they represent and relate to the living world in general. The last case takes further the understanding that design is a phenomenon unique to, and in some sense, synonymous with the social transformations that occur between participants engaged in and by design. Design grows socially engaged in the ways participants perform design through the politics and ethics of being in indiscipline. In summary, the ERC project, as a *weak* move to indiscipline, demonstrated that it’s not enough to have social and political motivations and set off to design different things differently, if the scaffolding of the design work happens through the prerogative that expertise is about controlling the language, the means and modes of transformation, regardless of who and which is present and engaged in designing. To recognize that what unfolds design and yields design possible is an active recognition of who is present, hence passionately and aesthetically engaged, holds a *stronger* understanding that design describes an encounter between the researchers and the people in Cova da Moura that conceives nothing because participants are turned to their own individual terms and patterns of production, instead of meeting each other in invention. In turn, demonstrating how design can *strongly* flourish as socialization and how contingency can be invoked and

¹⁶³ Here we are paraphrasing Kohn, from the original: “[t]he world is revealed to us, not by the fact that we come to have habits, but in the moments when, forced to abandon our old habits, we come to take up new ones. This is where we can catch glimpses — however mediated — of the emergent real to which we also contribute.” (Kohn, 2013, p.64)

design still emerge as design, the case with the flags puts forward that the very condition of design as a discipline is the fundamentally *indisciplined* social design encounter. Therefore, socialization from which designed things can grow well is not a matter of finding or negotiating identity but a matter of individual and collective conception as the case with the trees concludes. Socialization, as the flags demonstrated, grows not from compromise, persuasion, sharing similarities or making the same displaced. Rather, from processing differences and amplifying the differences that matter which can precisely destabilize and expand institutional and regulatory boundaries and limits of bodies, things and phenomena and how these may or may not take action. It's only when transformations do happen and do manifest that DESIGN IS THE SITUATION. So, when indiscipline is experienced as the expansion of design in the encounter with others that is when design processes, outcomes, forms, participants and things emerge *radically* transformed. In the process of turning a neighbourhood into a garden, or becoming anew with a flag, DESIGN IS A LIVING THING accounts the transformative power of the encounter with others precisely as the space where it is possible to experiment, rehearse, trigger and ultimately transform things into preferred ones.

4.2.3 Ethics of being in designing

Seeing how communities experienced the extraordinary presence of design destabilizing their neighbourhoods, this research enabled us to point to situations of indiscipline when everyday life became extraordinary in determining and transforming design situations. However temporarily, in the appearance and disappearance of the wall-newspaper, in the human-flags' propagation, in the diffraction of the 3D poster, or in the different ways of becoming another with trees and public institutions, design experts experienced the artificiality of the design discipline opening up spaces to rethink its possibilities and realisation differently. If through design, performed as an indiscipline, life also diffracted into multiple possibilities and diffuse designers experienced the artificiality of human conducts, norms, symbols and conventions, how and why did the situations not ultimately led to radical transformations of both design and life?

Seeing design as a "form", that is as a habitual or regular pattern of action that sparks into being as any human encounters a problematic, taking the design form seriously is to understand that design is not dependent on the presence of design experts nor contingent on being a discipline to take place as design.¹⁶⁴

Exploring how to do things with the design form, the case with the trees evidenced that to encounter a problematic is to encounter a specific configuration of reality that entails a spatial design logic – hence articulates a design politics. Beyond

164 Drawing from Gentes, 2017. See outline.

a cause and effect situation, the problem of the trees was a social space where bodies, things and phenomena meet and are engaged in live relational tension and composition. Rethinking these relations was to perform the design form beyond doing things with the design discipline. Beyond mechanical efficacy, it's through the form of DESIGN AS A LIVING THING that the Quinta da Vitória neighbourhood turns into a garden made of gardens. That living for around 40 years in the same place the trees can continue to live in another place through a different social world designed for and with them. This was the case where we experienced more radically the indiscipline of design as a radical destabilization and expansion of life through a design practice based on demounting social relationships and configuring new ones.

In this final chapter of discussing the contributions of this thesis, indiscipline is a provocation to understand that not changing the images and moves of the design discipline nor changing the form-acts of design experts in relation to others, to different contexts, realities or problematics that is what we regard as non-design. Because it is with all these different and unexpected others, contexts, realities and problematics that specific configurations of reality can be moved, turned or twisted. Deciding to take the social turn or to become social is to open a design space of diffraction that spaces appearance of multiple possibilities for design (products, processes and practices) that may be always already there, although not yet seen or perhaps invisible by the reality of what things are. Worse than that is when important matters remain invisible by our non-aesthetic forms of articulating the design discipline that hold on to outdated images or objects of 'what is design' to the neglect of everything else.

The four cases of this research demonstrate in different ways, through different sides of indiscipline, that design experts become social designers not by the fact that we come to have clear-cut things to do. But by the ways in which we can be in THE HOW of designing or interacting through designing with others¹⁶⁵ engaging DESIGN as both an inventive and production SITUATION.

As we conclude, socialization is not a specific culture or method of design. The social is a condition that constitutes design as a form and establishes indiscipline as the form-act of designing. Nevertheless, taking design for a socialization process seriously makes it impossible to confine design expert behaviours to an epistemological concern¹⁶⁶ for how we go about finding what to project and what role to perform at some particular time or in some particular place from the presumption of an exclusive knowledge. Design is not about producing the

¹⁶⁵ Paraphrasing Kohn from the original: "The world is revealed to us, not by the fact that we come to have habits, but in the moments when, forced to abandon our old habits, we come to take up new ones. This is where we can catch glimpses—however mediated—of the emergent real to which we also contribute." (Kohn, 2013, p. 66)

¹⁶⁶ (Kohn, 2013, p. 10)

alternative¹⁶⁷ that fits a situation, it is about conceiving a possible fit that ultimately demounts part of the artificiality of our human realities and conventions. This is a long process and it requires a long commitment from design experts but designing is about doing design not doing catalogues – and in the eyes of other disciplines we continue to be seen as the makers of catalogues and nothing else. To enact design as a form we should care and be careful of its form-acts and habits as a discipline. Committed to the social design space where social interactions are precisely the locus of where and with whom things are designed, however, every engagement with a problematic may always be a situated, unique and unrepeatable indiscipline. If being a design expert involves aligning ourselves with an ever-increasing array of design habits and assumptions then becoming socially engaged is more than being in habit and convention.¹⁶⁸ Social design is not so much about a *reproduction* of prefigured solutions but about conception, that is not exactly a matter of inventing novel or original things, but a living attention to unexpected happenings and real problematics. The cases of this thesis demonstrate that the social is a condition in the ways it determines the politics of designing process, therefore it should in direct ways transform how design experts work. Shifting social and ethical attitudes of orientation, the role of design is being in designing. In this view, this research is part of the movement to release the original or basic design form from an on-going automatic performance of conventional form-acts of ‘what is design’ that propagate our discipline as a static activity and profession, instead of a discipline that is open and can take us where the imagination of the neighbourhoods and communities we work with takes us. Embracing an ethics of ‘how to’ design in relation to others, our cases demonstrate that different performances of the design form were always and already possible and could potential expand the design discipline into unexpected practices. By ethics we do not mean design articulated to transform life as a moral mission or as activism from the measure of an ‘anti’ design ethos. To act responsibly in social design, as we have seen in the case with the letters or the trees, is not to the same as to act accordingly to conventional frames of behaviour, whether moral, symbolic, disciplinary or institutional.¹⁶⁹ The ethical in social design is to hand over questions

167 Here we are drawing from Foucault, to state that “you can’t find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people [...] and that’s the reason why I don’t accept the word ‘alternative.’” (Foucault *apud* Dreyfus and Rabinow, XXXX, p. 231)

168 Here we are paraphrasing Kohn from the original: “Being alive—being in the flow of life—involves aligning ourselves with an ever-increasing array of emerging habits. But being alive is more than being in habit. The lively flourishing of that semiotic dynamic whose source and outcome is what I call self is also a product of disruption and shock.” (Kohn, 2013, p. 62)

169 Drawing from Butler and Athanasiou, “the ethical is neither the moral nor the same as “responsibilization.” [...] I do not augment myself with my virtuousness when I act responsibly, but I give myself over to the broader sociality that I am.” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p.107).

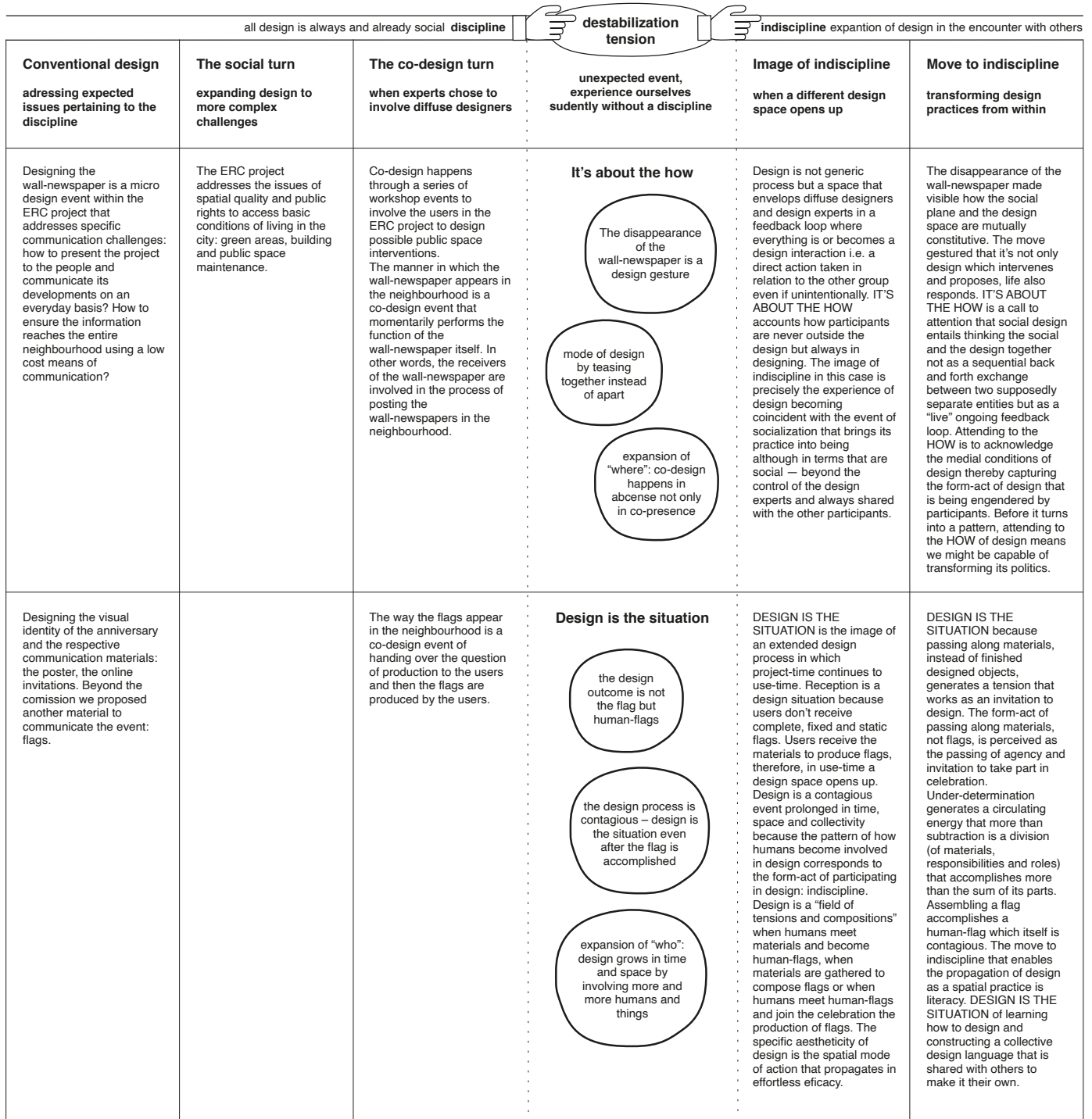
of ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ to the broader sociality that design is taking part in the design space as a collective event of socialization. The ethics of being in designing is about indiscipline when we recognise that becoming designers comes in the continuity of being with others, not because we have a discipline.

To conclude, the four cases of this research represent a journey of interpretation of indiscipline that grows more complex as design is experienced increasingly engaged with the communities and the realities we have encountered (see [Diagram D3](#)). First, the journey starts when having a discipline poses a series of obstacles to a participatory design engagement. Designing in the “project” mode¹⁷⁰ the experts had every aspect of the design process determined from the outset. In order to transform the Largo into another space the process had been divided into a series of workshop events where participants met together to co-produce ‘what to project’ and reach the final goal. Each activity fed the next encounter and was punctuated by moments of reflection and preparation for the next event assigned to the design experts. Evolving through a rhythm of design production and user reception, the researchers and the people of Cova da Moura played clearly defined roles as either makers or participants. The way the people interact, nevertheless, appealed to another ethos of designing. Their responses to how the researchers behaved signalled that the chronological and managerial mode of designing came into contrast with the social design space where everything was made common, hence, where the question of transformation was not granted but fundamentally in tension and open to debate. Indiscipline worked as a destabilization of the co-design process by the ways in which the design discipline imposed its own independent logics regardless of where and with whom it was operating. Moreover, regardless of the social turn and co-design move that had been made from the outset.

The next case, accounts the practice of design as a “field of tensions” where all participants, human and nonhuman, are deconstructed and composed in a poetic effort to make celebration intelligible for themselves and others. The flags were proposed and conceived by the design expert. Although, handing over the materials to make flags instead of the finished design product, the diffuse designers took over design production. The flags were produced in the neighbourhood by the people who used them and who circulated the message about the event of the anniversaries and things to celebrate with between a growing web of participants. Every time materials were passed along a design space opened up. Through ongoing projective abduction and under-determination between diffuse designers and design materials this is how design continued and revealed itself as an indiscipline on the day of the anniversaries and our immediate response to the event was: DESIGN IS THE SITUATION. These first two cases make a clear correspondence with the argument of indiscipline developed by Gentes. They

170 Drawing from Gentes, 2017. See outline.

account a transition from the chronological model that characterizes the design discipline towards the indiscipline of design that amplifies its fundamental form as a spatial composition contingent on the social as a condition. But while the author accounts this social space of conception as a generic plane of designing, our next two cases demonstrated something else. Looking through the binocular of indiscipline, with an eye on the social as a condition, what we learned in 2 de Maio or in the making of the Victoria Gardens Collection was that this spatial plane of design is not independent from reality. Being in the middle of the 2 de Maio neighbourhood painting letters or witnessing the community assemble the letters to take pictures, design was a space of multiple “where’s”, media, humans and nonhumans that diffracted reality into multiple possibilities. Taking the actions of unexpected others for design interactions within an established design space, their way of designing was not generic. Rather conception was actually ‘grounded’ in the real design events and in the problematics these immanently signalled. They were actions rooted in the physical corporality, spatiality and materiality of the design process, and this rootedness in the social reality within and beyond design opened up the discipline to meaningful change. In this case, indiscipline was the practice of design unfolding through discipline, as a spatial practice, although becoming transformed and expanded by the encounter with others. In our journey through indiscipline, this case postulates a transition from conventional design to social design in the ways it clarified the distinction between design processes which are driven by a generic goals and design processes which make their journey the goal. In other words, this case clarified a difference between choosing to become engaged to the social happening of design with all its affections of risk and uncertainty and not choosing the social and letting a preconceived motivation, goal or horizon of the design process impose its rhythm and course. The way we experienced indiscipline in 2 de Maio was through the emergence of ethical and unethical questions in regards to how the intentions of design were a misfit with the actual design actions, and vice versa, in ways that came to actualize the real effects and real implications of design in the present moment. Revealing the artificiality



continues in the next page

Diagrama 13. Moves to Indiscipline.



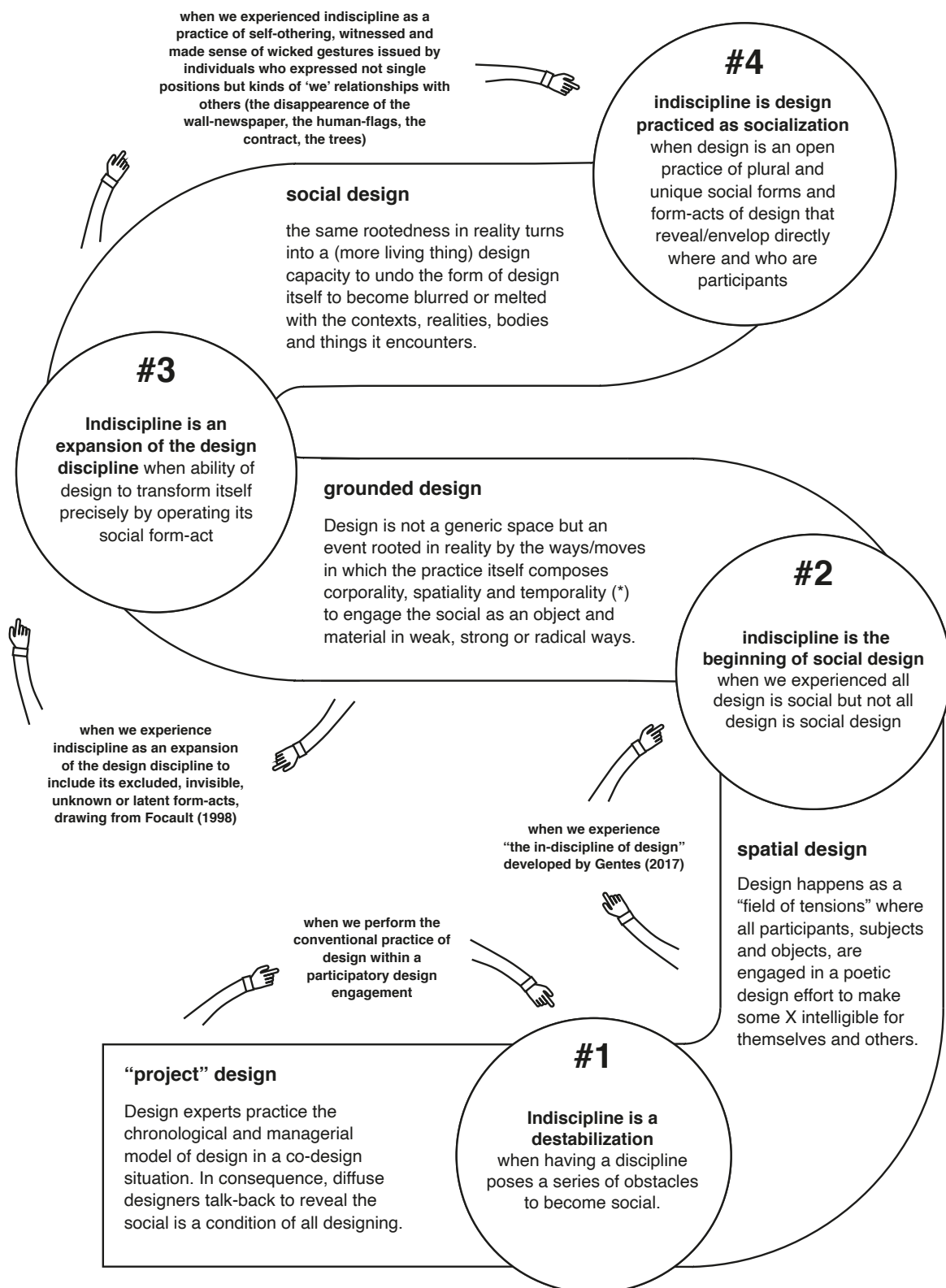
all design is always and already social discipline  destabilization tension  indiscipline expansion of design in the encounter with others					
Conventional design addressing expected issues pertaining to the discipline	The social turn expanding design to more complex challenges	The co-design turn when experts chose to involve diffuse designers	unexpected event, experience ourselves suddenly without a discipline	Image of indiscipline when a different design space opens up	Move to indiscipline transforming design practices from within
Designing a 3D poster to announce the celebration festival and welcome visitors in the neighbourhood.	The '2nd of May everyday' project addresses the issue of spatial quality, local community development and conviviality between different ethnic groups.	All the activities of the project involve the community through participatory methods. The team spends long periods of time in the "Home for all" managing everyday tasks of the project and organizing activities in the neighbourhood. Part of the production of the 3D poster happens in the neighbourhood when painting the letters involves the children.	Beginnings not ends <div>design expands in the encounter with unexpected others who are not primarily involved in the process</div> <div>expansion of "where": the temporal frame of design expands to anticipate the future and reveal possible ends ('where we are' vs 'where want to be')</div> <div>design is partial: the practice depends on who is looking, hence designing</div>	Design is an aesthetic situation that includes all that it is not. In BEGINNINGS, design is an indiscipline in Foucault's sense of the word. The interaction of the parents and the people is a destabilization that results in expansion of the design process because they open to consideration different meanings and goals that had been discarded or unthought-of but that were still already there - invisible or latent. Interference reveals the structure (and artificiality) of the design practice diffracting the focus to multiple kinds of meanings, ends and futures in the gestures and events that are being performed. Seeing what can emerge in the continuity of discipline, design enters a state of indiscipline - expansion - where it may or may not emerge transformed.	The move of indiscipline is diffraction. As a form-act of projective abduction, diffraction is the revelation of an expanded landscape of different possibilities that can potentially transform elements, disciplines or the practice of design itself. Diffraction is a move for reflection-in-action that happens through the generation of many possibilities from within the design situation. Under-determination can happen as a visual phenomenon that in this case destabilizes participants through abundance, excess or an ecstasy of things that appear and become extraordinarily present in the present.
Designing the visual identity for the project and the identity tags for the trees in the new garden.	The garden made of gardens was a project to keep the memory of Quinta da Vitória alive and make visible a neighbourhood that existed for more than 40 years although never featured the formal maps.	Ongoing involvement of different stakeholders in the project to co-design the collection and materialize the garden made of gardens.	Design is a living thing <div>expansion of "who": design is a transformative practice where participants become together and intervene as different kinds of 'we'</div> <div>to become social is a condition more than a choice</div> <div>transforming every human, nonhuman (trees) and object (identity tags) into design subjects</div>	This image represents a design practice where everything is social i.e. made/performed from the presumption of representing a social whole. What emerges in the design space are only design gestures characterized by being conscious or unconscious expansions of the participants themselves who have met each other and became transformed by the encounter. Design is an ongoing practice of self-othering in the sense that indiscipline is embodied by participants as they expand themselves through and with others in order to design for and with the collective. DESIGN IS A LIVING THING means that the design practice is fundamentally open and unfolds as the ways and manners participants deal with the question of 'how to' design in the face of a specific problematic and in communication with the partners to design with.	DESIGN IS A LIVING THING as a move signifies taking the social as a condition for the generation of materiality and meaning in design. What participants do in the case with the trees is to overstate their disciplines, habits, conventions and regularities to reveal opportunities to move the design process forward. In other words, when faced with difficult challenges, participants acknowledge situated constraints thereby amplifying can be shared/made common, i.e. where can a social design space be opened for change to flourish. To have a discipline or be part of an institution is not to hold on to a position, it is a starting point to form new relations, hence new social worlds. DESIGN IS A LIVING THING is a move to continuously amplify what is unique in our design engagements that can turn the impossible into something probable.

Diagrama 13. Moves to Indiscipline.

journey of indiscipline

journey of interpretation and learning through indiscipline



(*) framing specific sensory/sign presences hence aesthetic anticipations of possible futures. Here we might also recall Mazé's argument about design for social innovation which achieves micro and temporary "reconfigurations of society from within."

Diagrama 14. Journey of Indiscipline.

make its practice possible as an indiscipline that participants can constantly see the BEGGININGS NOT ENDS and be in a mode of designing that furthers the impossible as a better and tangible possibility. It's only through indiscipline and when indiscipline is a goal that a neighbourhood can turn into a garden.

In summary, indiscipline is not anti-design nor it is a notion to express when designers find themselves without a discipline. What we have learned by attending to the kinds of design gestures that exist beyond what we expect to be 'the design' gesture in ways that allow their diffuse design logics to work their ways through us, represents in this thesis the practice of social design. What we call indiscipline is precisely the recognition that one is inside design albeit performed in a different social way. In this view, indiscipline is an ethics of being in designing that is unique to the where and whom it involves and, in the process, becomes expanded and transformed as well. If the social turn is the beginning of design, to stay in the social mode is to expand the design discipline to unknown potentials that only indiscipline can capture.

SUMMURY OF CHAPTER

TABLE Moves 1

DIAGRAM Moves 2

DIAGRAM Journey

5. Conclusion

As a result of the completion of the case study analysis and discussion of the findings through the binocular of indiscipline we conclude that indiscipline is indeed an inventive space of possibilities for design that we have so far began to uncover.

Exploring different ways in which design as a practice became transformed and re-composed through social engagements, we conclude the social is far from being an object of designers' work. Becoming visible as the very condition that inaugurates and constitutes any design gesture, socialization is a medium and material of design with serious implications and potentials for practice especially when the social turn is a choice. The major contribution of this research is the conclusion that the social turn discloses different kinds of socialization within and as design. The situation of social design is an open field of 'how to' design where everyday life gestures are able to *co-design* holding serious implications and potentials for the design discipline. In this view, indiscipline is a suitable and invaluable concept to account the expansion of 'where', 'who', 'what' and 'how' that happens to design when it becomes social, through which it generates unique forms and form-acts of transforming situations into preferred ones, until today too easily dismissed for non-design or the end of designing.

Indiscipline is not anti-design nor does it represent a state when design experts find themselves without a discipline. Indiscipline is a liminal moment and place from where and when design practice can become transformed, still, indiscipline reveals design as a practice that cannot be separated from the social constellation of bodies, things and event that brings it into being. Therefore, we conclude indiscipline is how the social works its ways through and entwines design understood in this research as a discipline that is always open to expand its limits and opportunities because it is already grounded on the premise that representation, intention, transformation, future, and design, invaluable spread and multiply in the world not just the world of the design expert. Meeting the research objectives is not separate from one of the main contributions of this research to make sense of social design by trying to see how diffuse designers see and by imagining how different perspectives interact. For the sake designing more relevant, democratic, lasting and useful things with those we care about working for, one important contribution of this research lies in the attempt to see in depth when the people, non-experts, and diffuse designers think their ways through design experts and how that changes what it means to design.

By accounting design as an event of conception that is always constituted through

Conclusion

a relationship between two groups of participants, this is how we can complement and build on Annie Gentes's (2017) notion of "the in-discipline of design". The second invaluable contribution of this research is the binocular of indiscipline that provides a special way to view design as a space that always brings together diffuse designers with design experts. More than a theoretical framework, the binocular is an inventive method which mobilizes indiscipline as a device for analysing and interpreting a set of social design experiences. Composed by the spatial lens of design afforded by Gentes and the experiential lens that was built with notions and concepts learned from performance and anthropological studies, the binocular enabled us (throughout the empirical research) to attain socialization as a traceable and understandable phenomenon. How to stick with the discipline of design without losing it has been the overall attempt in this research and it is our first recommendation. Aware of the contradiction to turn to the performance and anthropological studies of two specific authors to ground our binocular of indiscipline, still, the specific contributions are a lesson in how to remain within a particular field. "The aesthetics of the performative" articulated by Erika Fischer-Lichte (2008) is precisely the conception of another understanding of theatre and artistic performances from the perspectives of how spectators respond to the actors or the artists. The notion of "thinking with the forest" is Eduardo Kohn's (2013) contribution to make sense of diffuse kinds of relationships, interactions and unexpected modes of communication between humans and nonhumans that have underexplored properties and unknown potentials precisely because our theories solely focus on how humans represent reality to the neglect of the ecology of selves where and with who/which we live.

Through the lens of the experiential we were able to capture and explore diverse features of the specific design processes from a social perspective, namely, feedback loop interactions, specific atmospheres, oblique modes of communication, role reversals, particular subject and object relationships, and so on. In this view, the binocular of indiscipline represents a particular way of moving beyond the traps of industrial and commercial paradigms that is not based on finding the alternative or opposition within the habits and conventions of design theory solely. Rather, by performing ourselves an expansion of the theories with which we set off to do design research. Taking others' concepts for design concepts and seeing what happens to design and our habitual notions of 'what the discipline is', the methodology of this research happens through design to enrich our vocabulary and open up the possibilities to understand things in different ways.

As one possible and valid contribution, this research represents our way of flourishing indiscipline as a consciousness about the event of design that may be founded on a politics of presence and ethics of being in performance. In this view, we conclude social design is not an independent sub-discipline of design, as

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another regime of designing with its own rules and norms. Rather social design represents a return to the basic form of design that is prior to discipline in ways that may contribute to the growth of the discipline. Through this research, we conclude, social designing comes in the continuity of design as itself a social practice expressing the ways more or less deeply the discipline becomes rooted or blurred with the lives and realities it engages. Moreover, signalling how are design experts themselves embodying indiscipline generating unique kinds of 'we' who are able to design socially, politically and ethically improbable great things. Adopting indiscipline as a mindset this research has affected us in two main ways. First, we have experienced a growth into our professional practices by the ways we are increasingly aware of the multiple interdependency between two and three-dimensional products, communications, services. By turning to the social, as a form-act of indiscipline, we've experienced known patterns and forms of the discipline become transformed, moreover had the chance to glimpse at unexpected and underexplored modalities of visual communication in the gestures of others or in situations of designing things with others. In this view, our recommendation is to take this research as a starting point to continue the work of performatively de-construct and re-compose this specific design discipline to disclose its possibilities for different kinds of social design practices.

This research is, therefore, a BEGINNING not an END. Another recommendation

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for what should happen next is for others to take indiscipline further as both a hypothesis and a method. In the directions of different studies with and about diffuse designers as well as building upon different theories within and beyond design. The task appears straight forward, although we have to be reminded about the contexts of 'where' and 'who' such acts of indiscipline might take place. Being based on the Portuguese context which from the perspective of social design is a diffuse scene where everybody designs although only a scarce few claim to be social designers, this research contributes to ascertain that it is possible to take the social turn and transform one's own practice. Seeing the diversity of ways in which social design engagements can happen, this research adds to the whole indiscipline movement of expanded issues of sustainability and care and expanded sciences, institutions and initiatives. On the other hand, placed within the specific context of the discipline of visual communication design this research performs a radical questioning of the ways in which commentary continues to be the main recognizable form of activism within. In this context, indiscipline is not only a recommendation it is necessary move. For the sake of not finding ourselves without a profession in the near future, we may insist on seeing what lies beyond our industrial and commercial heritage to prevent the effortless efficacy of continuously embodying the pattern of reproducing the same objects over and over again. Moreover, to expand the overall understanding of what is this visual communication design form that does not lie in solely designing the way things look but also involves designing the way things appear in space, in context, in relation or in presence in and beyond representation. Furthermore, to understand how a visual communication form is also beyond the knowledge of web interfaces and social media interactions (which are only different kinds of objects with the same disciplining logics) but what kinds of futures do open up when real trees can function as design media and materials within a social design process of transforming a neighbourhood into a garden? (see chapter 3.4) Addressing a lack of critical research within the field of visual communication design is another crucial contribution.

Secondly, as academics we find ourselves with a set of research ideas, questions and concepts to pass along to others to openly think about, turn around, design with and indiscipline. Pointing some of the most relevant future research recommendations, to conclude, we believe there is great potential in taking further the notion of social design as the practice of design itself although actualized. That is to say, the way we have traced and conceived the social turn can potentially function more thoroughly to represent a historical growth of the design discipline in contemporary terms for the future. If we can grasp social design as the original expression of the design pattern prior to any social attachment as a form-act, indiscipline is paramount. The notion is the very social space and process where

prototypical enactments of different design practices may be experimented and incubated. As we have seen, there are potentials for future research in using the binocular to interpret different cases and settings of design, or, in adding different concepts or rebuilding the binocular entirely with new perspectives. Furthermore, there is a wide field of opportunities in exploring in-depth the diffuse side of design as way that might work for design experts to better understand the politics of designing things with others. Shifting the priorities and the telos of design, however, demanded increased responsibility from designers to understand the contexts where design acts and especially the backgrounds of what design does. It is the revelation of a performative turn in the ways we do design that opens up to consider what is the discipline and how we might do socially and politically engaged work in and through it.

Last but not least, one of the major openings this research affords is to establish connections with the Education in Design. Coming back to the student's remark that transformed this research journey at a crucial point therein lies a whole different world to explore from the ways in which the social is treated as a topic to the ways the design process is taught as being an always and already social encounter between things and disciplines. Throughout this research process we have engaged different experiences with students to perform social design engagements both at the level of bachelor and master's levels, finding ourselves without ways to make sense of the complexity of operating social design in this arena. What kinds of devices we may invent to help us operate the notion of indiscipline with an emphasis on teaching practice? What are ways to have a close-up view of the social event of design to help students make sense of undisciplined moments? How and why does indiscipline make sense to design students, at what degree, for which purposes? When are the students ready to understand indiscipline as an expansion of the design discipline when discipline itself is not fully formed? How to work on the margins of the discipline without posing risks to learning but actually building on the potentials of indiscipline, to expand the students' abilities towards working with unknown results and uncertain processes? How can indiscipline foster curiosity about the other, of becoming aware of critical differences that can make a difference, of learning and developing critical eyes about the politics and ethics of design practices? How might indiscipline be a way to build the resilient and plastic disciplines we aim for by exercising it with those who will be our future design experts? How might they continue to look for difference social ways of designing for themselves, for others and for the future?

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