THE DECK
Or
Applying *rhizome-learning* to Teaching Architecture[1]

1.
This training/ WORKSHOP intend to develop the ability to configure elements of architecture in "objects" that although not yet responding to a specific function can be considered "architectural objects". They are the result of the materialization of ideas that responds to the direct experience of the space of the city in its similarity to a *forest* along the rout of tramline 28 in Lisbon.
We will talk about the spaces that configure these line questioning different elements of architecture such as: form / content, organic / geometric, light / shadow, closed / open, light / heavy, ecstatic / movement, public / private, thought / emotion, scale and materials. Psychological, compositional and formal aspects are apprehended and tested through a methodology that implies the constant dialogue between the immateriality of thought (reasoning, intention, memory, idea, emotions) and the materiality of representation (drawing, materials, and physical three-dimensional models). The relationship of reciprocity is tested in the passage of thoughts to forms - through the configuration and experimentation with different materials (pencils, inks, paper, cardboard, wires, cotton, plaster, cement, wood, wax, photography, sound, photos, film, others) - and otherwise, through the reflections and ideas that arise from analysis of these objects (drawings and models). We call this phenomenological methodology Rhizome-Learning. These experiences seek to develop in each student the urgency of making their own ideas tangible - the inseparable link between thinking and constructing.

2.
We think it's important that architecture teaching and learning begin with *reflection* on what is architecture, on how we inhabit the space that surrounds us, and how we can **record/communicate** the **ideas** on the spaces that we experiment. Stemming from the relation between **thought** and **action**, students are challenged to create drawings, models and objects, relating mental and manual activities, without recourse to restrictive rules and hard-set instructions.
The instrutors promote what is known as divergent thinking[2] (the thinking of artists, researchers and innovators), searching all possible solutions by an experimental methodology, by trial and error. **Creative activity** thus makes familiar what is strange and reveals what was thought to be already known to be often strange. The creative, transformative potential resides in this dynamics, as preconceptions are challenged, and the focus is set instead on the exploratory, scientific spirit, anchored in the idea of discovery.
To illustrate this methodological aspect we will analyze some Portuguese artists and poets and we will convene an international conversation about practices and artistic references that may be inspiring new forms of **mediation** and **reflection** on the space of the city.

Mário Cesariny, poème, collage, 1947   **Maria Helena Vieira da Silva**, paintings: Composition, 1936 / La Rue de la cité, 1958

3.

Our **cities** have become *forests*.This is a concept that we can interpret according to the increasingly complex and often alienating urban spaces that we live in. Issues of scale, form, rhythm, time, overlap and dialogue with our inner space (our own dreams, expectations, values…), a hostage of the digital era that simultaneously seduces and entraps us in a virtual context that we do not master, fostering a feeling of insecurity. Zygmunt Bauman tells us about these issues in his *The Burnout Society*.[3]

Byung-Chul Han, in his *A Sociedade do Cansaço*, also warns us about the excess of stimuli and information to which we are daily exposed. Han establishes a parallel between current society and wild life, reaching the conclusion that man, like the animal in the wild, must be watchful about all that surrounds him. This is the reason why man is losing perceptive capacities, those left getting ever more fragmented and scattered, and instead developing a new form of awareness that Han calls *hyperattention*.[4]

The complexity of forms, sounds, colours, element repetitions, routes, heights, light, shadow, etc., are characteristics that we can find both in the natural forest as in the urban forest and that evoke diverse emotions.

The exercise challenges the **students to think** on these **formal and psychological aspects** and to interpret them by selecting from their context (rout of tramline 28) *motifs* that impress them the most It is expected that students will represent spatial or emotional conceptions proper to human relation with space through specific forms of conceptual and abstract communication: models and sketches, 3D and 2D representation taking care that each is not the representation of the other one.

The complexity implied in **selecting just one emotion and one physical aspect out of each visited environment** compels to an exercise of careful analysis that is a consequence of the physical and intellectual experience of the visited spaces, thus promoting the individual, phenomenological[5] understanding of the sites – developing a kind of *specific attention* that develops the contemplative power that according to Han we are losing.

It is also proposed that students **write a paragraph** justifying their selections, and that they will present to the group.

The presentation of their ideas and sensations (in image and model)generates a **map** of diversified concepts, revealing a number of aspects that characterize architecture spaces of the citie in the line 28. Critical reading of this map will lead to group conclusions about the territory that they have experienced.

The form of communication / realization of this map can be analogical, digital or site-specific (it will result from the analysis and group discussion).
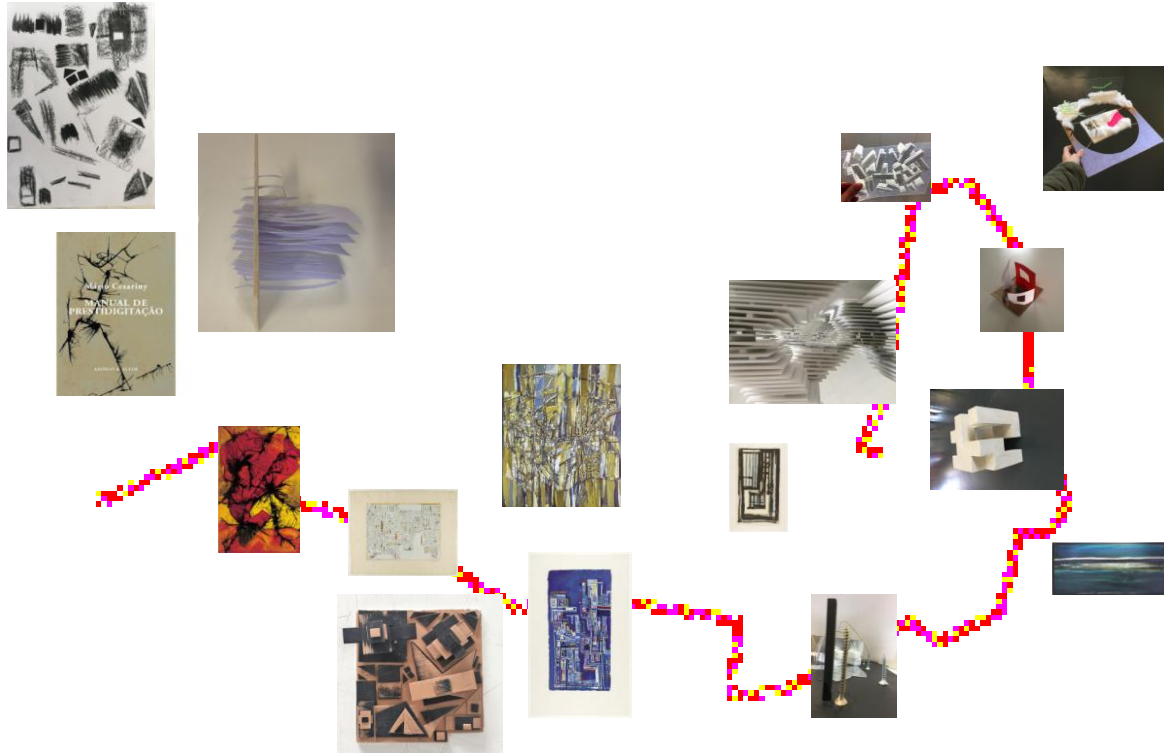
4.

This workshop studio will be led by the following tutors from the Departamento de Arquitectura da ECATI, Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias:

Bernardo Vaz Pinto; Isabel Barbas; Luísa Paiva, Maria Rita Pais; Nuno Griff; Vasco Pinheiro

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1 This concept arises from Deleuze's notion of *rhizome*. Taken as a biology loan, we apply this concept to a multiplicity of approaches in the teaching of polymorphism.Cf. Deleuze, Gil;Guattari, Felix. (1980). *Mille Plateau*. Paris: Minuit.

2 Cf., Gonçalves, Lino. (1991). *A arte descobre a criança*. Lisboa: Raiz editora, p.24.

3 Bauman, Zygmunt. (2009). Confiança e medo na cidade [*CITY OF FEARS, CITY OF HOPES].* Rio de Janeiro: JAHAR

4 Cf. Han, Byung-Chul. (2014). *A Sociedade do Cansaço* [The Burnout Society]. Relógio D'Água. Lisboa.

5 It is in this sense that we can recall Merleau-Ponty, when he declares in his *O Olho e o Espírito*: "To think is to experiment, to operate, to transform, with the reservation only of the experimental verification where only highly 'worked' phenomena intervene". The conception of our exercises relates to this thinking-in-action idea that Merleau-Ponty formulates. Cf, Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. (2000). *O Olho e o Espírito*. Lisboa: Vega, Coleção Passagens, p 14.