

WATER



**CA
SA**

**COIMBRA
ARCHITECTURE
SUMMER ATELIER**

2024

Coimbra Architecture Summer Atelier is an intensive workshop organized by the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra, Portugal. Combining practical and theoretical modules, CASA proposes to investigate the built environment from an architectural, urban and social perspective, taking Coimbra as a contemporary artefact of reflection and intervention.

Immersed in an atelier environment under tutor guidance, students and young professionals are challenged to develop design strategies that address proposed cyclical concept themes. A theoretical component is added to this programme through informal sessions and debates, where concepts, ideas and projects are discussed so as to stimulate the design process.

CASA provides a *forum* for architectural experiment, the lively exchange of ideas, sharing of knowledge and promoting of a cultural space. Participants will find here a dynamic and interdisciplinary space for interaction with dedicated professionals of contemporary architectural practice, as well as renowned academics committed to teaching and research in this field.

Embracing diverse nationalities, cultures and learning processes, CASA intends to promote the exchange of practices, experiences, and ideas across generations, having as its main goal the creation of innovative design proposals for Coimbra.

CASA 2024

WATER

Pedro Maurício Borges

Many cities were built on the banks of rivers or in their deltas, or by lakes or seas¹.

Providing drinkable water and powering mills, the river was also the main channel through which goods and ideas arrived. Near the river's mouth, salt could also be extracted at its junction with the sea, the immense desert for so long unknown.

With the advent of seaside tourism, coastal cities turned towards the sea and invented a new urbanism designed for long walks, sea air breathing, and sunbathing, as a therapy for the industrial era's diseases.

In waterfront cities we simultaneously witness the comfort and security of the built environment side by side with the intemperance and indomitable nature of water — the river and floods, the sea and storms. Romanticism created the scenic and sentimental relationship with water, while the medical discourse invented the beach. Romantic contemplation was combined with the therapeutic effect of being in contact with nature. There is no need of the countryside or the mountain when one lives by the sea, or even the river.

Some communities thrive in the river, retrieving fish and salt from it. Others dare and make their living from the sea, which, in return, charges in human lives. Closer to shore, surfers challenge the fury of the waves, and on land sand castles are built.

The rain that fell gently on the town, as in Jim Morrison's verse, ravages it today with such intensity, that water stops being elusive and becomes an overwhelming presence, a destructive force. The sky turns liquid and the earth a torrent. The cities' ground then becomes a margin with the air turned into water.

1. Spiro Kostof, *The City Assembled*

(*Thames and Hudson: London, 1999*), 39.

City, river and sea

Located next to the river's mouth on the north bank of the *Mondego* River, the city of *Figueira da Foz* follows the pattern of Portuguese coastal cities, seeking both water and sun.

Until the 19th century, there was only one urban front facing the river, with public squares replacing former river beaches. Then, with the advent of seaside tourism, the city turned towards to the sea.

In the mid-20th century, *Figueira da Foz* had a riverfront and a seafront. In the former, the urban front faced a tidal pool, a fishing port and, further east, the commercial port; in the latter, the urban front was lined up along the coastal avenue, with the beach at its feet. The river front turned towards the sea where the Fort of *Santa Catarina* stands, the same place where a Roman lighthouse might have existed².

Since then, the city's waterfront history has been dominated by the port's history.

With the construction of jetties to protect the entrance to the port in the 1960's, *Figueira's* beach grew unstopably. The north jetty acts as a dam against littoral drift, the current that runs from north to south carrying the sediments that feed the beaches along the coast. Retained sand is missing from the beaches south of the river, and its continuous accretion to the north has distanced the city from the sea.

In the late 1980's, the fishing port's picturesque life that animated the river front moved to *Cochim Dock*, on the south bank. The marina that took its place is a parking lot for recreational boats. Additionally, the port's access channel was narrowed to reduce silting. The resulting landfill, facing the front of the market and on the south side of *Bairro Novo*, together with the marina, distanced the city from the river.

2. Vasco Gil Mantas, "Um farol Romano na foz do rio Mondego?" ["A Roman lighthouse at the mouth of the Mondego River?"], in Ana Margarida Ferreira and Raquel Vilaça (coord.), *Santos Rocha, Arqueologia e Territórios da Figueira da Foz*, [Santos Rocha, *Archaeology and Territories of Figueira da Foz*] (Municipality of Figueira da Foz, University of Coimbra: Figueira da Foz, Coimbra, 2021), 214-233.

3. "Returning the Sea to the City" was the motto of SOS Cabedelo, an activist association led by architect Miguel Figueira and surfer Eurico Gonçalves. Initially founded to defend the Cabedelo wave, the association soon became involved in the broader discussion of the city and the coastal territory, originating the proposed bypass system.

Reclaiming the river and the sea...

The river is lacking the city.

Summer tourism and the retreat to the opposite bank of the fishing port recentralized the collective and recreational space in Bairro Novo, desertifying the relationship with the river. The excessive width of the embankment was occupied by a succession of parallel strips with roads, flowerbeds and sidewalks that fail to imbue any meaning to the arid void that distances the built front from the water.

Beyond the station, it's the railway that separates the river from the urbanized bank.

The city is lacking the sea

With the mechanical reconstitution of the drift through a bypass, extracting sand from the city's waterfront to reposition it on the beaches of Cabedelo, to the south, the sea will reclaim the city's shore³. Besides a mere automobile road, the coastal avenue can become the mediator between the city, the static built environment, and the sea, the natural fluid with waves and tides of unstable moods.

ATELIER TUTORS

Afonso Cabral
Bruno Lucas Dias
Diogo Rodrigues
Frederico Martinho
Hugo Santos Silva
Inês Morão Dias
Maria João Cunha
Rui Filipe Pinto

SESSION LECTURERS

Miguel Figueira
Pedro Maurício Borges

**8–15 Jul
2024
dARQ
Coimbra
Figueira da Foz**

CALENDAR

8 MON

09:00 Participants welcome and briefing
09:15 Opening session
CASA 2024 “Water”
10:00 Bus departure to Figueira da Foz
11:30 Exhibition visit
“O Mar é a nossa Terra”
[“The sea is our land”]
14:30 Intervention sites visit
20:30 Return to Coimbra

9 TUE

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

10 WED

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

11 THU

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Intermediate group presentations

12 FRI

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

13 SAT

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

14 SUN

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

15 MON

09:00 Workshop
14:30 Final presentations with guest critics
18:00 Workshop closing and diploma ceremony
20:00 Closing dinner

FEES

The fee for attending the summer atelier is 25€.

The fee includes:

- Intensive participation in a 8 day workshop and sessions;
- Closing dinner;
- Studio material and printing expenses;
- 24/7 studio access;
- Student kits (dARQ books, CASA booklet and credentials, notebook and pen, map of Coimbra);
- Certificate of participation.

The fee does not include:

- Travel expenses to and from Coimbra;
- Meals and accommodation;
- Local transportation outside of studio working hours or CASA programme.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

To apply, please access the

following link:

www.uc.pt/fctuc/darq/casa/

The filled application form should be sent to: coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt

The deadline for applications is 30/06/2024.

CASA 24 has a limited number of places available, the enrollment procedure will close once 30 applications are confirmed. Payment of the course fee will only be requested after the application is reviewed and considered eligible for participation. This can take up to one week, depending on the number of applicants.

If the application is successful, CASA team will send a confirmation email along with payment details and other information. Each applicant has a period of seven days to pay the participation fee once the confirmation email is sent. Registration will only be valid after payment confirmation.

Cancellation policy:

If the cancellation request is sent before 30th of June, half of the participation fee will be refunded. Applications cancelled after this date will not be refunded.

DISCLAIMER

Each participant is responsible for ensuring that they have a safe stay in Portugal and should

arrange their own travel and health insurance. CASA team is not responsible for any type of accident or damage, property or healthwise, that may happen during the workshop.

USEFUL INFORMATION

The city center of Coimbra, where the University is located, is a dynamic and diverse area with numerous restaurants, bars and accommodation possibilities, such as hostels, guesthouses and more, all with an affordable pricing.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- www.uc.pt/en/fctuc/darq/
- www.uc.pt/en
- worldheritage.uc.pt/
- www.lonelyplanet.com/portugal/central-portugal/coimbra
- visit.uc.pt/en/about/

FAQS

Where will the workshop take place?

CASA will be held at the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra.

Address:

Departamento de Arquitetura
Edifício Colégio das Artes,
Largo D. Dinis
3000-143 Coimbra

In which language will the workshop be held?

Both the workshops and sessions will be held in English. CASA team does not require participants to present a language certificate, however, we strongly recommend a good level of fluency.

Are there any specific requirements for participation?

CASA mainly aims to architecture and urban planning students or recent graduates. A strong command of both hand drawing and computer drawing skills is advised.

Do I need to bring my laptop?

Each participant should bring their own laptop. Drawing paper, cutting tools, rulers and other supplies will be provided. Nevertheless, we encourage each participant to bring their own drawing materials, such as pencils, pens and others.

Will I be granted a diploma/certificate of participation?

Upon successful conclusion of the workshop every participant will be given an official diploma of participation signed by the CASA representative and the Department of Architecture director.

How will I get notified if my

application is successful?

CASA team will send a confirmation email informing each applicant whether his application was successful or not.

Will there be access to wifi?

During their time in the Department of Architecture, participants will have free access to Wi-Fi provided by the University server.

When is payment due?

The applicant will be asked to pay for the course fee once his application is confirmed and accepted, this is done via email, where payment instructions are also sent. Registration will only be valid after payment confirmation. Payment deadline is 30/06/2024; Applications submitted in the 30th of June will have extra time for payment. The application form should be filled and sent to CASA: coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt

Will CASA be responsible for issuing my VISA?

Each participant is responsible for obtaining their own VISA. For invitation letter purposes, please inform the team during your application procedure.

