

CULTURS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE | 2024

Towards creative resilience?

Re-imagining urban cultures, sociabilities and participation

International conference | 14-15 November 2024 | Coimbra

An international conference organised by the CES Thematic Line on *Urban Cultures, Sociabilities and Participation* to critically and pragmatically explore the concept of ‘creative resilience’ and its application in academic research, civic society, and public policy. The conference aims to foreground the agency of cultural actors and practices, and the essential need for equitable and inclusive civic participation in collective transitions and transformations towards regenerative and resilient strategies and actions. It acknowledges the need to reexamine culture-nature relations in our lives, renew urban-rural cultural connections, and inform public dialogue on resilience, which guides contemporary public policies and interventions such as the Portuguese Recovery and Resilience Plan (2023-2026)¹.

¹ PRR: Theme 1 is: Resiliência / Resilience - “A dimensão Resiliência está associada a um aumento da capacidade de reação face a crises e de superação face aos desafios atuais e futuros que lhes estão associados. Esta dimensão surge para promover uma recuperação transformativa, duradoura, justa, sustentável e inclusiva, sendo entendida no contexto PRR em todas as suas vertentes: resiliência social, resiliência económica e do tecido produtivo e resiliência territorial.

Na dimensão de Resiliência foram consideradas 9 Componentes com vista a reforçar a resiliência social, económica e territorial do nosso país. Estas componentes incluem um conjunto robusto de intervenções em áreas estratégicas, designadamente a saúde, a habitação, as respostas sociais, a cultura, o investimento empresarial inovador, as qualificações e competências, as infraestruturas, a floresta e a gestão hídrica.”

<https://recuperarportugal.gov.pt>

OPEN SESSIONS TO PRESENT PAPERS

S1A | Rights-based governance models for cultural policy

Coordinators: Nancy Duxbury, Isabel Ferreira, Jordi Baltà (Universitat Ramon Llull - Blanquerna, Spain)

CULTURS Axis 1 - Right to the City: Innovative forms of governance and the right to the city, culture, nature, housing and well-being

There are significant connections between the right to the city and the scope of local cultural policy, including the central role given by advocates of the right to the city to urban imaginaries as a way to transform urbanity (Petcou and Petrescu, 2015) and how, in the work of Henri Lefebvre, the right to the city is complemented by the right to difference, underlining the role of culture as a space where to combat homogenisation (Martin, 2006; Baltà Portolés, 2021) and enable the emergence of interactive pluralism and diversity. These connections are also embodied in recent approaches to cultural policy based on cultural rights, which place emphasis on culture as a terrain to construct spaces where citizens can understand themselves and each other and freely embark on their life projects (UCLG, 2015). Central to this understanding is the availability of governance spaces and processes, which allow inclusive and diverse deliberation, negotiation and decision-making. This can take a variety of forms, ranging from community engagement in the governance and management of cultural venues or projects, frequently at neighbourhood or district level, through formal decision-making bodies at city level involving a variety of stakeholders, to the development of evaluation models which place emphasis on the exercise of rights. This session will aim to gather reflections and experiences on the implications of rights-based approaches for the governance of cultural policy, particularly, but not restricted to, at the local level. Contributions may include case studies and general reflections on the specific implications of these approaches, as well as the obstacles hindering further progress.

S1B | Financial turn in architecture: Critical perspectives from Europe

Coordinator: Eliana Sousa Santos

CULTURS Axis 1 - Right to the City: Innovative forms of governance and the right to the city, culture, nature, housing and well-being

This session aims to showcase critical perspectives about capital and architectural practices within the social and political contexts of the recent past, and to contribute substantial scholarship to the crucial task of mapping and analysing the multiple phenomena underlying some of the fundamental problems of the present, such as housing and spatial inequality.

Between 1970 and the present, new housing policies and financial instruments emerged, creating a financial turn when new types of extractive logics in the economy appeared through the exploitation of material properties and the creation of abstract financial instruments. The analysis of architectural production, specifically housing projects, in parallel with the overlapping fields of economic and social policy, may be helpful to characterise other events, such as the global financial crisis of 2008, and give insights over the presently escalating social inequality and the onset of the global housing crisis.

The expanded notion of capital, based on Pierre Bourdieu's definitions of social, cultural and symbolic capital, may be useful to explore new methodologies of analysis and critique of architectural operations. Bourdieu acknowledged the influence of architectural history in the development of some of his conceptual instruments, specifically the concept of habitus, that originated from his reading and translation, in 1967, of *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (1951) by Erwin Panofsky. Later in the 1980s, Bourdieu identified the growing phenomenon of housing financialisation and analysed the housing market in France, a study that was later published in English as *The Social Structures of the Economy* (2005).

We welcome papers that focus on the production of architecture as capital in its expanded forms (financial, social, cultural, and symbolic), and that address different social and geographical contexts in Europe. Themes to be explored might include, but need not be limited to, the following:

- the relationships between architectural production and capital;
- the symbolic and cultural capital of architectural practices;
- financialization in its several scales: local, regional and global;
- spatial inequality;
- the privatisation of former public buildings, social housing, public parks and landscapes.

S2A | Educational living labs: research and practices for an inclusive public space

Coordinators: Gonçalo Canto Moniz, Rita Campos, Cláudia Pato de Carvalho, Isabel Ferreira

CULTURS Axis 2 - Living labs and dialogue, capacity building and empowerment processes

More than ever, the privatisation culture threatens the urban space that occupies not only squares, streets or parks but also public institutions, such as schools, and museums. The public dimension of the urban space is not guaranteed as a space where citizens have the opportunity to raise their voices and enrol in participative and collaborative ways, namely to decide on their future, their neighbourhood and their city.

Living labs are experimental laboratories based in real contexts promoted by groups of citizens and stakeholders to co-create solutions for the specific needs of their territory. These actions create a dynamic space of interaction between different types of institutions, individuals and organisations, are bottom-up and create the opportunity for dialogue between institutions - such as municipalities, academia, schools or cultural associations - to support the process.

In particular, educational institutions play an important role in activating other forms of citizen engagement to identify needs and explore solutions that put children, youth, their families and the surrounding communities in the centre of the public space. In this sense, educational living labs can transform the public space into more democratic and open structures where children and youth play an active role. The articulation of living labs with an engaged citizen social science, promoting the development of small critical research projects that can integrate different knowledge, further amplifies the transformative potential of such processes.

Researchers and practitioners are invited to present and discuss research or practices that aim to activate an educational living lab in public spaces as well as in schools (and other education related spaces), considering also the relations between living labs and citizen science practices

S2B | Connecting Cultural Mapping and Cultural Strategic Planning

Coordinators: Nancy Duxbury, Will Garrett-Petts (Thompson Rivers University, Canada)

CULTURS Axis 2 - Living labs and dialogue, capacity building and empowerment processes

Cities are increasingly challenged to develop cultural and social policies—and related research methodologies—that are expected to work with other areas such as economic development, social inclusion, and urban planning. Participatory cultural mapping provides a ready approach and platform for this inter-sectoral work.

As a field of inquiry, cultural mapping represents two interrelated areas of study and practice: The first focuses on cultural assets, identifying, locating and quantifying tangible and intangible assets, typically with the aim of developing a cultural resource or community asset map. The second area, associated with the rise of critical cartography, employs participatory mapping techniques to create a multi-vocal community narrative of place, bringing stakeholders together in purposeful conversation and group problem solving. Taken together, the two areas of cultural mapping seek to combine the tools of modern cartography with vernacular and participatory methods of storytelling to represent spatially, visually, and textually the authentic knowledge, assets, values, views, and memories of local communities.

Both forms of mapping have become increasingly employed by governments, most notably municipalities, and by academics worldwide, often under the premise that they promise an ability to engage and connect with populations and communities not normally inclined towards political/academic participation. We wish to discuss how participatory mapping can become an effective mechanism to foster citizen-led interventions and democratic governance, based on processes that spearhead new modes of participatory interaction with citizens (Ortega Nuere and Bayón, 2015). We note, however, in most situations, participatory cultural mapping tends to be employed as a one-time initiative, a project rather than a long-term strategy, and thus typically remains not fully articulated or integrated within community planning and development practices (Duxbury, 2019; Garrett-Petts et al., 2021; Garrett-Petts and Gladu, 2021). We argue that if cultural mapping is to become sustainable and transformative, community engagement must be based on partnerships that are more than merely transactional—that is, focused on more than operational tasks and fulfilment of short-term expectations. We invite proposals that dialogue with these concerns and issues.

S2C | Community-engaged research approaches with impact

Coordinators: Nancy Duxbury, Sílvia Silva, Claudia Carvalho, Stuart Poyntz (Simon Fraser University, Canada)

CULTURS Axis 2 - Living labs and dialogue, capacity building and empowerment processes

Community involvement in research projects plays a crucial role in emphasising and understanding the uniqueness of each place, articulating the narratives and knowledges emerging from local history and community stories, and building upon these to craft new initiatives. Multi-sectoral community engagement approaches can facilitate dialogue between different actors and sectors, encourage the sharing of values and aspirations, and contribute to fostering a deeper sense of community, ownership, and empowerment that can prevail over time. They can also be crucial in offering possible solutions for social issues identified in the community. In contemporary academia, aspirations to ‘co-create’ knowledge with communities are heightening and becoming more visible, but we also observe resistances to fully embrace the challenges and implications embodied in meaningful community-academia collaboration. These doubts and hesitations raise questions about the broader implications of democratising knowledge through meaningful community-engaged processes. And yet, it is through community-engaged research approaches that meaningful and enrooted change can be nurtured, empowered, and enacted. This session will examine leading practices of community-centred work through the lens of participation, engagement, infrastructures, and local impacts. How can rethinking-through-practice redefine what the role of researchers can be? How can academia be better engaged with contexts outside the university? How can social innovation projects be co-developed that are aligned with community needs? How can researchers meaningfully and closely work with community members to pursue future-forming trajectories?

S2C | Communities of practice in local cultural policy

Coordinators: Claudino Ferreira, Nancy Duxbury, Jordi Baltà (Universitat Ramon Llull - Blanquerna, Spain)

CULTURS Axis 2 - Living labs and dialogue, capacity building and empowerment processes

The notion of ‘communities of practice’, referring to processes of collective learning through practice in a particular domain of interest, involving joining activities, discussions and the sharing of information (Wenger 1998, Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015), connects well with the understanding of cities as living labs, which can promote citizen participation, empowerment and capacity building. The use of communities of practice is relatively frequent in some areas of local policy and management, such as citizen science (Göbel, Cappadonna et al. 2016, Manzoni, Vohland et al., 2021), but less common in cultural policy – where connections have only been formulated in relatively abstract terms (Sacco, 2011, 2021) or when referring to specific areas such as cultural heritage or arts festivals (Adell, Bendix et al., 2015; Comunian, 2017; Kockel, Nic Craith et al., 2020). We believe, however, that the implications of communities of practice in cultural policy, particularly at the local level, could be further explored, including in terms of collaboration with stakeholders in local cultural ecosystems in a ‘horizontal’ setting,

connections between local experiences and global developments (e.g. through cross-border networks and projects), and the related adaptation of governance models. This session aims to discuss the implications of communities of practice in local cultural policy, what conditions could enable their emergence, and which existing models in the design, implementation and evaluation of cultural policy, or related cultural projects and activities, may resemble communities of practice – e.g., working groups and networks at local, national or international level, participatory projects, initiatives connecting culture and education or culture and sustainability, etc. It will also analyse how universities, research centres or observatories may play a role in such processes of collective learning.

S5A - Place-based innovation and regeneration: Cultural actors as agents of change

Coordinators: Nancy Duxbury, Sílvia Silva, Paula Abreu, Sílvia Ferreira, Anna Hildur Hildibrandsdóttir (Bifröst University, Iceland)

CULTURS Axis 5 - Artistic, architectural and urban practices as creative interventions in society

Since the COVID-19 pandemic period, community well-being has been centralised, with co-competition strategies, the practices of social economy actors, and the development of local collaborative arrangements and networks highlighted. This situation creates a framework for developing place-responsive strategies, with cultural actors frequently taking on leadership roles to foster culturally sensitive and place-based innovative initiatives that benefit local communities and territories. Aiming to push beyond just presenting inspiring projects, this session explores the challenges and opportunities of cultural actors as agents of change. It looks at whether storytelling and creative industries can ignite transformative waves in local communities, and spark innovative solutions to address local challenges. It aims to examine how cultural actors leverage place-based specificities and affordances, and the key features and conditions that can enable cultural actors to develop impactful and sustainable initiatives for local benefit. And it considers how public agencies might respond to support these initiatives. Do they allow these agents and initiatives to become part of cultural policy and territorial planning?

S5B - Urban youth infrastructures

Coordinators: Cláudia Pato de Carvalho (CES), Stuart Poyntz (Simon Fraser University, Canada)

CULTURS Axis 5 - Artistic, architectural and urban practices as creative interventions in society

Youth creative arts and media organisations/initiatives – such as youth groups, associations, youth-arts related initiatives, and other non-formal public spaces where youth intervene as agents of social change

– represent possibilities related to alternative ways of intervening in society, particularly in urban spaces, but also in non-formal education contexts. Non-formal learning contexts are diverse and tend to be underestimated and sometimes invisibilized in terms of the impact they represent to the development of youth capacities and learning possibilities – and how these may open possibilities in terms of the professional development and professionalisation of youth as creators and artists in the creative sector. There is still a lot to be analysed in terms of the possibilities that these youth creative endeavours offer to the development of the creative sector, contributing to its innovative potential. What types of interactions need to happen, or are happening, between more formal creative arts educational contexts and non-formal educational contexts that may be important for the sector? What type of impact do non-formal educational contexts have in youth’s lives and in their professional future related to the creative sector? How do these non-formal educational contexts empower youth to be active agents of social change in their communities?

S6A

Co-creation of human-nature based solutions: research and practices for an inclusive urban and rural regeneration

Coordinators: Gonçalo Canto Moniz, Isabel Ferreira, Beatriz Caitana

CULTURS Axis 6 - The role of nature in urban and rural space and the dialogue with human-based ecosystems

We can find two basic premises within the more than human turn in the social sciences (Grussin, 2015). The first is the need to question anthropocentrism, directing our attention to the diverse field of more than humans (which includes fungi, plants, non-human animals, objects, technologies, etc.). The second refers to the fact that, while the problems humans currently face are directly dependent upon the fate of more than humans, democracies, with a few exceptions, are characterised by the structural exclusion of more than human beings. In this context, this panel seeks to analyse how different ways of directly representing or presenting the diversity of more than humans are being developed through artistic practices. We start from the hypothesis that these practices have the potential to alter the ontological and epistemological frameworks that configure the exclusion of more than human beings. In this way, these artistic practices allow us to discuss how we can broaden the scope of politics and democracy to actively incorporate more than humans and how to transform our human democracies into multi-species democracies (Donaldson, Vink and Gagnon, 2021).

ROUNDTABLES WITH INVITED PARTICIPANTS

RT3A - Creating resilient communities through collaborative heritage management practices

Coordinators: Catarina Almeida Marado; Lorena Sancho Querol

CULTURS Axis 3: Material and immaterial cultural heritage and the transformations in the built environment

[roundtable with invited participants](#)

Socially and culturally collaborative practices in the field of heritage management are fundamental tools for new forms and formulas of cultural sustainability, heritage re-significance and sociocultural adaptations, as well as for community resilience. Civic participation in cultural heritage production, in understanding its significance and in the collective construction of preservation and valorization actions, contribute to the creation of more resilient communities, capable of collectively preventing, facing and recovering from the daily challenges. Local inhabitants are the connoisseurs, the users and the transformers of the cultural heritage that emerges from cultural and social interactions, the construction and transformation of the built environment, the ancestral know-hows and techniques, rituals, and ways of life. How can we collectively manage local heritage in order to create a win-win process, in which the local community co-think, co-produce and co-decide on the life of its own heritage? The aim of this roundtable is to discuss the nature and anatomy of collaborative and innovative practices of cultural heritage management, both tangible and intangible, for the development of more active, responsible, and resilient communities. It will start with the dynamic presentation of four innovative, complementary and challenging case studies, giving the voice to the public afterwards. The goal is to discuss the cases and to stimulate reflection and critical debate on the transformative, regenerative and resilient effects of these management practices where local communities play an essential role.

RT4A - Sociocultural Urbanities

Coordinators: Carlos Fortuna

CULTURS Axis 4: Urban cultural discourses and practices, knowledge production and social dynamisation

[2-3 Hours Roundtable in a Hybrid format](#)

Cities, either metropolises or small towns, and urban gestures develop in sociocultural environments of diverse nature and delimited spatial contexts that allow us to capture multiple and often overlapping sociocultural landscapes or urbanities. Some engage us with traces of historical times (diverse historicities, disputed heritage, etc), others relate to city uses (urban environments, tourism, technologies, mobilities etc.), while still others depend on affective or sensory experiences (sound- and smellscapes, foodscapes, artscapes etc.). This session, to be carried out as a hybrid roundtable with invited scholars, calls for a series of 10-15 minutes contributions (short papers) that reveal different ways to discuss particular spatial experiences, the characterisation of urban places, or the sensuous practices in urban encounters. The ultimate aim is to help interpret contemporary sociocultural urbanities in order to open up more expansive ways of re-imagining urban cultures and design other public policies and interventions.

RT4B - Creative resilience and Indigenous knowledge systems

Coordinators: Julius Heinicke (UNESCO Chair "Cultural Policy for the Arts in Development" at the University of Hildesheim, Germany) and UNESCO-Chair Partners, Nancy Duxbury (CES, Portugal)

CULTURS Axis 4: Urban cultural discourses and practices, knowledge production and social dynamisation
[roundtable with invited participants](#)

The panel will present various models of indigenous ways of knowing that are conveyed in artistic formats in urban contexts and examine their potential for the concept of "creative resilience." On the one hand, indigenous artistic and creative concepts can be used in urban contexts to create innovative and contemporary definitions of culture in order to capture the diversity of urban societies and offer many groups points of contact. On the other hand, these concepts can be used in different ways to grasp the topic of sustainability and are perhaps suitable for understanding creative resilience in the context of sustainability. Both promote the resilience of cultural localisations and create sustainable spaces for negotiation for a resilient urban society.

The panel will be hybrid with cooperation partners of the UNESCO Chair who are conducting research in the fields of indigenous knowledge, artistic resilience, and creative sustainability: Dr Prüfer-Durojaye, Hildesheim, Germany; Dr Alfdaniels Mabingo, Uganda; Dr Harriet Adjahoe, Ghana; Dr Sarah Foster-Sproull, New Zealand.*

* (still to be requested and clarified whether individuals will be present - funding issue)

RT5A - More than human art, ethics and politics

Coordinators: Patricia Vieira (CES, Portugal); Alfredo Ramos (CSIC, Spain); Giovanni Allegretti (CES, Portugal)

We can find two basic premises within the more than human turn in the social sciences (Grussin, 2015). The first is the need to question anthropocentrism, directing our attention to the diverse field of more than humans (which includes fungi, plants, non-human animals, objects, technologies, etc.). The second refers to the fact that, while the problems humans currently face are directly dependent upon the fate of more than humans, democracies, with a few exceptions, are characterised by the structural exclusion of more than human beings. In this context, this panel seeks to analyse how different ways of directly representing or presenting the diversity of more than humans are being developed through artistic practices. We start from the hypothesis that these practices have the potential to alter the ontological and epistemological frameworks that configure the exclusion of more than human beings. In this way, these artistic practices allow us to discuss how we can broaden the scope of politics and democracy to actively incorporate more than humans and how to transform our human democracies into multi-species democracies (Donaldson, Vink, and Gagnon, 2021).

EXHIBITION

Utopia/Dystopia – experiences in housing

Coordinators: Jorge Figueira, Bruno Gil, Gonçalo Canto Moniz, Giovanni Allegretti

CULTURS Axis 1 - Right to the City: Innovative forms of governance and the right to the city, culture, nature, housing and well-being

“Utopia/Dystopia – experiences in housing” is an exhibition resulting from the research/pedagogical proposals of História da Arquitectura and Teoria da Arquitectura disciplines at the Department of Architecture of the Faculty of Sciences and Technology of the University of Coimbra. It follows the Land Purpose project coordinated by Renato Cymbalista at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo, and it shows the research of students in the aforementioned units, dealing with different experiments on housing from utopian to dystopian results, from rehabilitation or occupying spaces to futuristic models. As it is stated in the Land Purpose project: “people have always sought to produce utopian realities with these same resources: property that cannot be bought and sold, that democratise access to housing, that guarantee the cohabitation between human and non-human beings, that preserves memory and the environment for future generations. The Land Purpose project seeks to give visibility to these people and projects. It shows the diversity in property arrangements: foundations, associations, kibbutzim, squats, spiritual territories, quilombos, cooperatives.” The University of Coimbra’s iteration of this project brings forward the “República” case study as a place of juxtaposed

housing experiences along with other cases of radical experimentation that deal with ecology, old age, vegetarianism, religion. According to the Land Purpose model, the exhibition will consist in an A4, front and back, black and white, where “the front page is seen in the exhibition, containing technical information about the case study, a good quality image with a caption carefully constructed, and a callout text.” The “Utopia/Dystopia – experiences in housing” exhibition will also present the research process that led to the final result and will integrate roundtable sessions on the subject.