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EXERCISE 2 PROGRAM: ARCHITECTURE, BUILDING, LANGUAGE AND TECTONICS

OBJECTIVES

Exercise 2 aims to consolidate design practice at close scales, with a focus on the built environment. It introduces materiality as a key concern.

The student is expected to develop the following skills:

- Creative capacity in responding to design challenges within the context of an established urban environment.
- Deepening disciplinary culture to support the design process, cultivating an awareness of architectural language.
- Understanding space, its dimensions, ergonomic relationships with human movement, and dynamic perception as a reference for its transformation through design.
- Ability to question the multifunctionality, sharing, and temporary use of architectural space in contemporary society.
- Capability to develop and realize an architectural idea through design, exploring the relationships between form, language, and materiality.
- Exploration of materiality issues within architectural space, addressing its plastic expression and introducing construction-related concerns.
- Mastery of project representation techniques (manual methods), combining two-dimensional representations and exploring three-dimensional spatial thinking, ensuring spatial, dimensional, and expressive control of precise drawings and models.

PROGRAM / Syllabus

The building to be developed is a cultural facility for collective use, the *Casa do Escritor* (House of the Writer), which aims to promote literature and its interaction with other arts, focusing on the activities of writers and the artists with whom they engage.

The exercise focuses on an urban plot with an area of 400 m² and a 13 metre difference in elevation between Rua da Bombarda, at the lower level, and Rua Particular à Manuel Soares Guedes, at the upper level.

On Rua da Bombarda, the building's position between two façade planes establishes a dialogue between the architectural project and the urban context, expressed through the design of the public space. A deliberately compact plot is chosen in order to allow the project responses to be explored in greater depth, extending to closer scales of intervention and to the development of materiality. The project also aims to explore verticality as a means of developing students' skills in three-dimensional spatial thinking. Particular emphasis is placed on the cultural framing of the architectural choices to be developed.

The following constitute general guidelines for the development of the project:

- » Approximately 25% of the plot area must remain permeable, incorporating a tree, in order to safeguard the environmental values of the city of Lisbon.
- » The project must ensure a connection between the streets at the lower and upper levels.
- » The ground-floor layout must address the widening of Rua da Bombarda and establish a relationship with the public space located uphill.
- » The architectural project must consider a reinforced concrete structure with free infill. The aim is to further explore the constructive dimension of materiality, converging towards the definition of the architectural language and developing, at all scales, the intentionality of its plasticity, metrics, composition, temperature, sound, among other aspects.

The *Casa do Escritor* — House of the Writer must comply with the following programme:

- » A central library/archive space, open to visitors, with a minimum clear height of 6 metres and significant spatial qualities, which may occasionally accommodate activities such as book launches, poetry readings, literary gatherings, round-table discussions, small concerts, among others.
- » A sound and image chamber, accommodating permanent activities such as video screenings, recorded dialogues, installations, among others. The space must be enclosed and cubic, with a minimum volume of 125 m³.
- » Reading spaces, where silence prevails and where the spatial quality creates highly suitable environments for reading or studying.
- » Service spaces, including a reception, a small bookshop area, an office, and a restroom.
- » A social and gathering space, also with a high level of spatial quality, including a café service and outdoor terrace, with a reference gross floor area of 90 m², including a small kitchen and pantry, storage and refrigeration areas, and a counter/bar frontage.
- » The permeable courtyard must be usable and articulated with the facility's principal spaces.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXERCISE

The following specific aspects of the exercise development must be fulfilled:

- » All stages of the work, including submissions, must be developed by hand on A1 tracing paper sheets, forming the working process, which constitutes a central component of the assessment.
- » During the first two weeks of the exercise, the project may be developed exclusively through sections and three-dimensional drawing elements, including general or interior perspectives and physical models. Floor plan drawings should not be produced during this initial exploration period.
- » Research into architectural references to support the project, to be developed within the studio group, exploring the architectural language that inspires the student and addressing aspects of materiality proposed for further investigation. This research must be incorporated into the working process.

CALENDAR

- Exercise 2 launch: Class 6, October 12th.
- Midterm delivery: Class 13, November 4th.
- Delivery of exercise 2: Class 21, December 2nd.

SITE OF THE EXERCISE

The exercise is developed in Arroios, Lisbon, focusing on a plot located between Rua da Bombarda, at the lower level, and Rua Particular à Manuel Soares Guedes, at the upper level, encompassing the area delimited in the following figure:



Legend: The delimitation of the intervention area for exercise 2 (highlighted in black) on an aerial photograph from 2023, Google Maps.

EVALUATION

The exercise is based on a continuous assessment process and regular interaction between the teaching team and the work produced by the student, both in the classroom and during independent work. The evaluation criteria are considered throughout all the classes, not just at the final submission.

The assessment criteria for the exercise focus on the previously identified exercise objectives and on the quality of individual participation, attendance, and punctuality of the students:

The assessment criteria for the exercise are as follows:

- C1 - Creative ability in a consolidated urban context: 10%.
- C2 - Deepening of disciplinary culture as a support for the project: 10%.
- C3 - Suitability of the design solution, including:
 - Adequacy of the response to the functional program: 10%.
 - Ability to realize an idea through the project: 10%.
 - Spatial and aesthetic quality of the architectural object: 10%.
- C4 - Control and intent in addressing materiality: 10%.
- C5 - Mastery of project representation techniques (manual methods): 10%.
- C6 - Development and quality of the design process: 20%.

C7 - Quality of participation in classes, attendance, and punctuality: 10%.

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