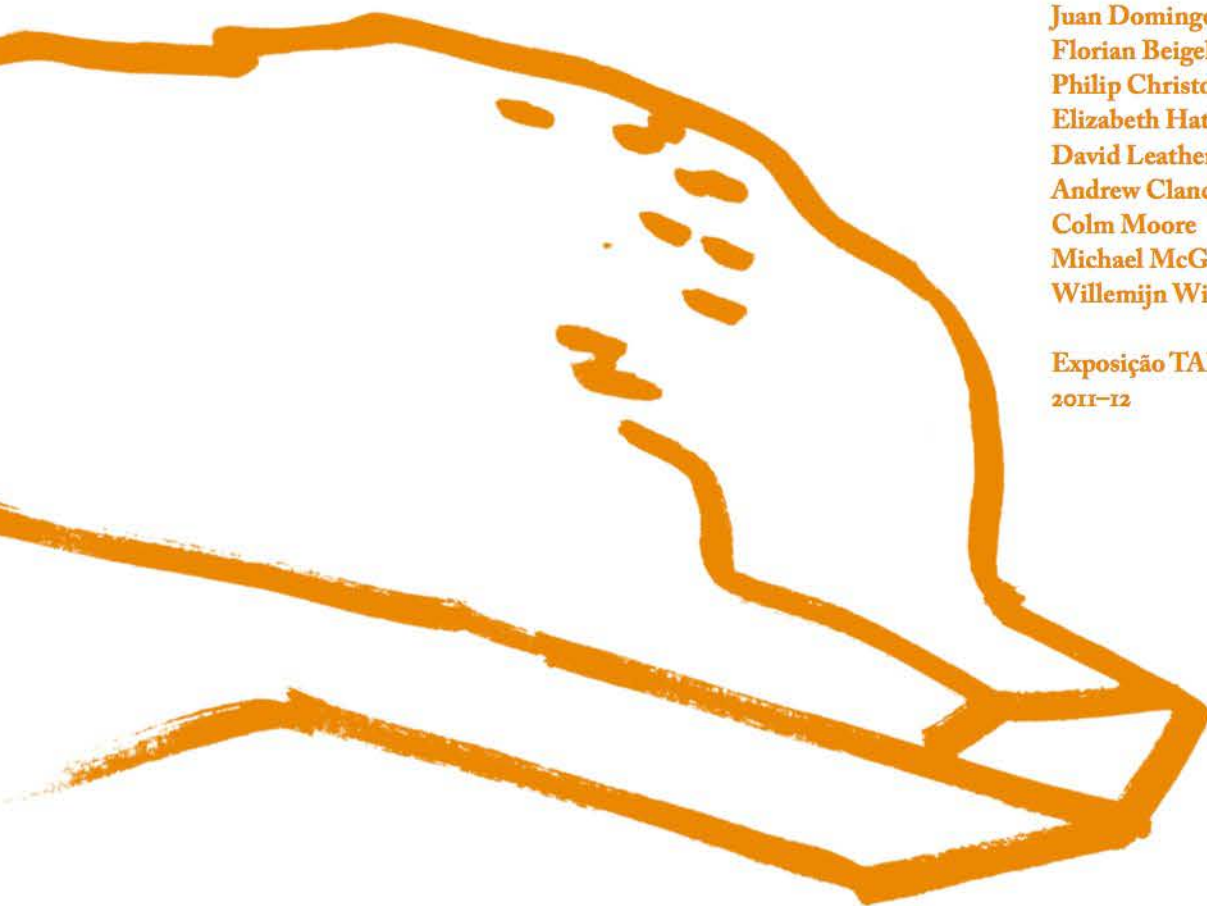# JOELHO
#04

**ENSINAR PELO
PROJETO
TEACHING THROUGH
DESIGN**

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Coordenação:
Paulo Providência
Gonçalo Canto Moniz

Alexandre Alves Costa
Juan Domingo Santos
Florian Beigel
Philip Christou
Elizabeth Hatz
David Leatherbarrow
Andrew Clancy
Colm Moore
Michael McGarry
Willemijn Wilms Floet

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José António Bandeirinha
4.1. Disciplinary intersections and synthesis

The evolution of the pedagogical use of the potentialities of architectonic practice necessarily implies that it should be considered an essential condition for the specificity which characterizes the education on Architecture. How can that specificity be characterized?

Although it expresses itself through many different ways, there's no doubt that, at a first glimpse, it can be understood via a certain methodological order which characterizes the exercise of the project in Architecture. That order has, whether we like it or not, a unified root that is a permanent inquietude concerning the spatial disposition of everything, which leads directly to an urge to modify, very characteristic of architects. Undoubtedly, it is a subservice kind of order; it goes against the dominant trend that permanently imposes the pseudo-referenced expression of the individual's will as an absolute condition for collective freedom. It is a kind of order that has been having its ups and downs along the history and the theory of architecture, and it has the particularity of dialectically renewing itself, accordingly to the different contextual conditions.

The students' attitude towards the project enjoys from an intense coexistence with different sets of inputs, from the program to society, from formal frameworks to conceptual frameworks, from functional optimization to visual optimization, from material rationalization to economic rationalization, from the technological knowledge to empiric knowledge among many, many others.

However, the use of a overall cohesion effect prevails in that attitude, and that effect will monitor the whole process, sometimes in a radical way. It is about structuring the generation, project by project, of a system which will lead the complex articulation between the different scales[1], of a mechanism that both facilitates and assures the unity of the process and the coherence between its diverse parts. It is about the famous, albeit nameless, élan of the whole and parts, of the parts and the whole and of the parts between themselves. This élan, which has been successively and ceaselessly evoked by innumerous texts of the Theory of Architecture, is diachronically shaped along the epistemological tradition, "la dure obligation du tout"[2], an assumption which insinuates as if it was a methodological pulse and which is accepted almost as a default configuration, that hasn't yet been analyzed deeply enough and conditions enormously the evaluation criteria of the works of architecture.

On the one hand, this occurring is natural, the simplest project contains within itself a huge variety of data, which in turn must articulate different scales, different and not diachronic time overlays, with ethical and/or social subjectivity. Besides that, its ambition often is to rely on scientific knowledge and technological experimentalism. It therefore becomes more convenient, and above all more comfortable, to generate systems that, case by case and project by project, articulate and hierarchize that data, instead of searching for a universally accepted system that validates the data regardless of its circumstantial differences.

On the other hand, that methodological pulse which aspires the reach of the final balance between the parts and the whole leads

to a research that, from the point of view of reasoning, is not limited to the project. It is also present in the analysis stage, even if it is, as it should be, simultaneous with the project stage, because that pulse generates the integration of the comprehension process in the transformation process, leading them both to be one and the same thing.

As time goes on, with the maturation of the students' learning process, it begins to insinuate itself into their ways of perceiving the world, it begins to establish itself as a desire, more or less obsessive, to sort things in space according to rules, metaphors, concepts, modules... Inevitably, the first years of the studies provoke changes in the students, as used as they were to other comprehension systems, more decomposed, more elementary and more cumulative.

So, it is also about preparing the students for the gradual confrontation with that pulse. Sometimes, it is necessary to lead them to savor the slow immersion in these different domains of understanding and reasoning, others, it is pedagogically more useful to dip them abruptly, wishing that their own instrumental autonomy will lead them to a safer destination.

Concerning the education on architecture, this double cohesion which traverses the physical and conceptual integrity of an architectural work and settles in the narrative integrity of the process itself, logically strongly depends on each student's idiosyncratic nature, his own history, his own culture, his own origins...

For the architecture's students, the working sheet or the computer's screen are a space of confluence and synthesis; the growing complexity of the answer for a project implies the intersection of diverse ways of seeing. For an architect, the starting point is disciplinary, i.e., it always starts from a disciplinary idea of intervention, a composed idea, it defines the rules of a self-imposed game.

In a learning moment, an architecture student does not have yet the plain notion of the set of questions to which any project is subject to. It should be clear that what may be taught in an architecture school is a set of instruments or instrumental capacities and a set of strategies to address complexity problems.

In this table discussion, Diogo Seixas Lopes gives us precisely the substance for the critical re-use of the typological order as a vehicle of the autonomic enunciation, i.e., he gives us the reposition of a radical dialectic tension which places architecture between its own statement and the seduction for the ideological strategies of technology. Pedro Ravara uses his own experience to debate, in a documented way, the architect's role as pedagogue, the architect's double function of doing and teaching, as well as prominence of the practice as the central holder of education. Andrea Monteiro Vicente considers about the methodological formulation of synthesis, and about how to make it evolve from the scope of implicit tension to the scope of explicit conscience. Finally, Konstantina Demiri, Sofia Tsiraki and Giannis Athanasopoulos debate, from a point of view of a peculiar pedagogical experience, the immense possibilities of interpenetration of the methodological resources associated to the artistic practices, particularly to music, within architectural education.

1 → Cf. Philippe Boudon, "Le point de vue de la mesure dans la conception architecturale: de la question de l'échelle à l'échelle comme question": Philippe Boudon [sous la direccion de], De l'architecture à l'épistemologie. La question de l'échelle, Paris, PUF, 1991, pp.171–195, or even the article Philippe Hamon, "La Hiérarchie: Literature et Architecture: tout, parties dominante", pp. 147-166.
2 → Id., p.187.