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**UTOPIA IN THE HORIZON: PLANO NACIONAL DAS
ARTES AND THE PATH TOWARDS AESTHETIC
DEMOCRACY**

Report presented to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to
obtain a Master's degree in Culture Studies, specialisation in
Management of the Arts and Culture

By

José Maria Marques da Costa Cortez

Universidade Católica Portuguesa – Faculdade de Ciências
Humanas

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ABSTRACT

On June 18th, 2019, Paulo Pires do Vale, the recently appointed Commissioner of Plano Nacional das Artes presented its manifesto and strategic action plan to a room filled with political figures, cultural agents, artists, and media outlets, and so began the slow explosion of a seed. Yet, what exactly is this Plan? How does one define this complex matrix of notions that is simultaneously transdisciplinary and undisciplining in its praxis, in both its reflection and action? It is to the task of defining Plano Nacional das Artes that this reports aims at.

To do so, I begin this work by proposing the assumption that Plano Nacional das Artes can be defined as *utopian aesthetic-democratic mission structure of counter-hegemonic nature that seeks to produce new subjectivities through critical pedagogy and citizenship practice*. However, as the first academic research into Plano Nacional das Artes this study starts looks to contextualise and explore the Plano's origin, structure, team, and manifesto.

This work is supported in my internship experience, literature review and interviews to Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive. Drawing from Paulo Freire's notion of praxis, I first propose a transdisciplinary look to the theories and concepts that frame my assumed definition of PNA. Secondly, I analyse Plano Nacional das Artes' action – its manifesto and measures, through the theoretical lenses explored before.

Finally, this report concludes that assumption with which it started is a reasonable definition for Plano Nacional das Artes and that its apparently paradoxical transdisciplinary and undisciplining nature is a corollary of art knowledge's escape of the binary notion of thinking.

Keywords: *Plano Nacional das Artes, aesthetics, critical pedagogy, counter-hegemony, democracy, and utopia.*

RESUMO

A 18 de Junho de 2019, Paulo Pires do Vale, recentemente nomeado Comissário do Plano Nacional das Artes, apresenta o manifesto e o plano de ação estratégica do mesmo a uma sala repleta de figuras políticas, agentes culturais, artistas, e membros da comunicação social, e assim começou a lenta explosão de uma semente. Contudo, exatamente o que é este Plano? Como é que se define esta complexa matriz de ideias que é simultaneamente transdisciplinar e indisciplinada na sua práxis, na sua reflexão e ação? É à tarefa de definir o Plano Nacional das Artes que este relatório se dirige.

Para tal, comecei este trabalho assumindo a proposta que o Plano Nacional das Artes pode ser definido como uma *estrutura de missão utópica e estético-democrática de natureza contra-hegemónica que procura produzir novas subjetividades através da pedagogia crítica e da prática da cidadania*. Contudo, como a primeira pesquisa académica sobre o Plano Nacional das Artes este estudo inicialmente procura contextualizar e explorar as origens, a estrutura, a equipa e o manifesto do Plano.

Este relatório é baseado na minha experiência de estágio, em revisão literária e em entrevistas com a Comissão Executiva do Plano Nacional das Artes. A partir da noção de práxis de Paulo Freire, proponho, primeiramente, um olhar transdisciplinar sobre as teorias e os conceitos que enquadram a assumida proposta definição do Plano Nacional das Artes. Em segundo lugar, procuro analisar a ação do PNA – o seu manifesto e medidas através da perspectiva das teorias e conceitos explorados antes.

Finalmente, este relatório conclui que a assumida proposta que lhe deu início é uma legítima definição do Plano Nacional das Artes e que a sua aparentemente para dóxica natureza transdisciplinar e indisciplinada resulta da evasão do conhecimento da arte de uma noção binária de pensamento.

Palavras-chave: *Plano Nacional das Artes, estética, pedagogia crítica, contra-hegemónica, democracia e utopia.*

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To my mom, you are my home, thank you.

To my grandma, IT'S DONE!, I love you.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

PNA – Plano Nacional das Artes

DGArtes – Direção-Geral das Artes

PNL – Plano Nacional de Leitura

PNC – Plano Nacional de Cinema

PEEA – Programa de Educação Estética-Artística

RBE – Rede de Bibliotecas Escolares

RPM – Rede Portuguesa de Museus

PS – Partido Socialista

PNEA – Plano Nacional de Educação Artística

FCG – Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

CAI – Centro Artístico Infantil da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

ACARTE - Programa Serviço de Animação, Criação Artística e Educação pela Arte

GPENEC - Grupo de Projeto para a Estratégia Nacional para a Educação e Cultura

EEA Grants - Mecanismo Financeiro do Espaço Económico Europeu

CISOC – Compromisso de Impacto Social das Organizações Culturais

IICO – Índice de Impacto das Organizações Culturais

GEPAC – Gabinete de Estratégia, Planeamento e Avaliação Culturais

DGPC – Direção-Geral do Património Cultural

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- a) All non-English texts have been translated by the author of the thesis.
- b) The author chose not to translate the name "Plano Nacional das Artes".

1. INTRODUCTION

“In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also, lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines, and measurable speeds, constitutes an *assemblage*.”
(Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 3-4)

How does one define, describe, and analyse a governmental programme that is transdisciplinary in its conception, branched in its reach, and multifaceted in its approach and action, especially when such an endeavour dwells in the complex intersection between culture, arts, aesthetics, politics, pedagogy, and citizenship?

Surely there are a number of fields of study that focus on these matters: political science, political philosophy, philosophy of education, culture studies, critical and literary theory, pedagogic theory, or critical and radical pedagogy. However, to select one or a few would be to leave out key dimensions that compose the “substantive multiplicity”. To create a linear hierarchy or to frame this analysis in an arborescent like causality chain would be to negate its “assemblage” nature. Borrowing from the work of Deleuze and Guattari I propose to approach this study from a rhizomatic perspective: “There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines.” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 8). I aim not to describe, define, and analyse by separating theoretical frameworks in distinct levels of importance, linearity, or causality, but rather considering them as “determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions” simultaneously operating as assemblages. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 8).

The focus of this report is the analysis of the Plano Nacional das Artes (henceforth referred to as PNA), a mission-structure born in June 2019 under the tutelage of the Ministries of Education and Culture of the Portuguese Government, for the period of 2019-2029. As such, PNA’s history, founding concepts and values, mission, team, structure, and action must all be considered – entailing a comprehensive incursion into PNA’s “*praxis*”, as Paulo Freire observed: “action and reflection”. (Freire (1970) 2000, 125).

This report is based on my six-month internship with PNA, from October 2019 to April 2020. As the first academic foray on the subject, I believe it is imperative that it be specifically and clearly circumscribed to systematically describing, defining, and analysing PNA's origin, conception, and praxis: its theoretical framework and how said framework is both reflected in and a reflection of its approach and action. This work aims to provide a comprehensive account of the executive committee and team's choices and intentions, and despite providing more insight in Education areas – the most advanced in PNA's strategy's application – it nonetheless presents a wide range of examples that outlines its successful (sometimes not as much) impact in the cultural field, educational regime, and overall society. It also must be said that in this study Plano Nacional das Artes will not be explored as a point of departure for other undoubtedly relevant analysis focused on cultural or public policy studies. Not only due to the absence of similar programmes when one looks at Portugal's cultural or culture and education policy record, but because even if successfully found international cross study comparisons are out of the scope of this work.

The methodology applied in this internship report was varied in its nature and importance. This study's methodology mainly hinges on case study analysis as the preferable method for PNA's universe exploration through a variety of lenses, although I have refrained from comparative analysis with other governmental programmes. Literature review is widely employed throughout the text - specifically relevant in the construction of this analysis' theoretical framework: it is transdisciplinary and of qualitative nature. At last, semi-structured interviews were held with PNA's executive committee who were very forthcoming in providing key details as to their intention in the creation and view on the importance of PNA's praxis, as well as on their evaluation of the programme's successes and shortcomings.

Investigating Plano Nacional das Artes was a choice that rose from my personal interest, and later, internship and working experience. “What is that? What do they do? Is it for schools only? For museums too? Who is it for?” these were some of the questions I was presented with in conversations with family and friends who had no idea what PNA was. It was always hard to define PNA: it escapes easy definitions and clear distinctions on areas of action, hermetic ideas and concepts run aground when faced with its transversality and transdisciplinary nature. It got me thinking on how best to describe and define it.

I believe there is a case for Plano Nacional das Artes to be defined as a *utopian aesthetic-democratic mission structure of counter-hegemonic nature that seeks to produce new subjectivities through critical pedagogy and citizenship practice*. I know, this seems like a really long and quite vague definition. It probably is. Nonetheless, it is also the main idea that I set out to defend in this report. I think if you stay with it until the end of this work you will find that it is quite a reasonable definition.

PNA embodies a unique and holistic thinking that set it apart from other cultural or culture and education governmental plans and programmes. It lacks the established public perception and acknowledgment of National Reading Plan (PNL), the widespread reach of National Cinema Plan (PNC), the tools, political significance, and legal mandate for the management of the cultural sector of Directorate-General for the Arts (DGArces), or the dimension and territory distribution of School Library Network Program (RBE) and Portuguese Museum Network (RPM).

On the other hand, Plano Nacional das Artes has a transdisciplinary manifesto in which culture, arts, heritage, education, and citizenship are for the first time in Portugal viewed as indissociable concepts of intrinsic dialogical nature and essential components for social change. Moreover, its transversal character is reflected in the diversity of areas, territories, and communities where it's expected to act upon, following and supporting a complex web of artistic entities, cultural institutions, schools, political agents, and local stakeholders throughout the country.

It also must be noted that PNA's has a *death sentence* since its inception. Created for the period between 2019 and 2029, this inescapable fate means that PNA can never be quite comparable to any of the existing governmental plans or programmes: it aims not at perpetuity, but at obsolescence – to affect change as to not be needed anymore. Additionally, the fact that it shares its tutelage with both the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, is both a legitimisation of its transversality, as well as an added point of natural politico-bureaucratic dispute and stress.

To analyse the present and future of PNA we must first return to the beginning - the second chapter of this report is focused on PNA itself: its creation, mission, structure, team, as well as the realities of operating within state bureaucracy. To that end, I will begin by drawing the politico-social-legal ideas and values in contemporary Portugal that PNA as inherited, as well as charting the intentions and motivations for its creation. I will

then focus on my internship experience, looking into PNA's mission, manifesto, partners, structure and team, and my role in its action. Lastly, I will give an account of the troubles and tribulations of navigating the bureaucratic state apparatus.

The third chapter will focus on a rhizomatic approach to the praxis: action and reflection of Plano Nacional das Artes, intending to materialise and substantiate my aforementioned proposed definition. Firstly, I will look to explore and expand on a diverse tangle of theoretical perspectives – the *reflection*, bringing to the fore a rhizome of theories that delve into utopian literature, cultural sociology, critical and literary theory, aesthetics and agonistics politics, and critical and radical pedagogy. Then, I will look to analyse PNA's approach and initiatives – the *action*. To that end I will look to create a space where action enters in dialogue with reflection: analysing how PNA's concrete approach and initiatives are framed within the theoretical rhizome that define its own multiplicity. To do so will allow me to define and ascertain PNA's praxis, painting a full picture of the programme's identity and mission.

In chapter four I will look to the successes and shortcomings of PNA's early existence, as well as looking to present some insight into the evolution of some of PNA's most notable and most discussed measures in this work, between the end of my internship in April 2020 and its submission in November 2021. Furthermore, I will add my reflection on the challenges that PNA might face in its future.

2. CAN IT BE ALL SO SIMPLE? DEFINING PNA

2.1. A brief origin of Plano Nacional das Artes

“We tryin' to make our own shit
So that when our children, word
So that when our children, all our seeds and whatever
They got somethin' for theyselves right there”
(Wu-Tang Clan 1993)

“Tree
the slow explosion of a seed”
(Munari 1993, 4).

“We want cultural structures for socialism. We do not want
cultural structures for totalitarianism. We want cultural structures
for the cultural revolution and not cultural structures for political
steering.”
(Breyner 1975a, 621).

Plano Nacional das Artes reflects through its mission and manifesto the inherent connection it shares with figures and ideas that have helped shape the cultural and socio-legal values of contemporary Portugal. There are lines and points that connect and intersect with PNA over time, as Davin Heckman observed on the rhizomatic approach, “(...) culture spreads like the surface of a body of water, spreading towards available spaces or trickling downwards towards new spaces through fissures and gaps (...)”. (Heckman 2002). If we wish to look at the ideas and the figures that share this perennial connection with PNA we should begin by revisiting the fundamental text of Portugal’s democracy. Published almost two years after the *Carnation Revolution* of 25th of April of 1974, the 1976 Constitution of the Portuguese Republic states that:

Article 73:

1. Everyone has the right to education and culture.

(...)

3. In cooperation with the media, cultural associations and foundations, cultural and recreational groups, cultural heritage associations, residents' organisations and other cultural agents, the state shall promote the democratisation of culture by encouraging and ensuring access by all citizens to cultural enjoyment and creation.

Article 78:

1. Everyone has the right to cultural enjoyment and creation, together with the duty to preserve, defend and enhance the cultural heritage.
 2. In cooperation with all cultural agents, the state is charged with:
 - a) Encouraging and ensuring access by all citizens to the means and instruments required for cultural activities and correcting the country's existing asymmetries in this respect.
 - b) Supporting initiatives that stimulate individual and collective creation in its multiple forms and expressions, and more travel by high quality cultural works and items. (...)
- (Constituição da República Portuguesa 1976).

There is a subtlety in these words. A quiet yet undeniable hint: an intention that as a society we go beyond the common conception that our collective rights regarding culture and arts are at the level of enjoyment and fruition alone. That we seize the tools and the means for cultural and artistic production for that is our constitutional right. As such, to create and implement a governmental programme that focuses on providing citizens of all ages the inspiration and the means for cultural, artistic, and creative creation is simply, in PNA's Manifest's own words, "(...) an attempt to comply with the intention established by the force of these words (...)". (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 12).

Our cultural and artistic constitutional rights are indissociable of the key figure to which they owe so much of their conception: Sophia de Mello Breyner. A notable personality in Portuguese contemporary history, she was a distinguished poet and acclaimed writer. She was also a parliamentarian in the 1975 Constituent Assembly of Portugal¹, elected by the Socialist Party (PS). Her eloquent interventions still bear a deep sense of gravity, casting a long shadow on Portugal's cultural thinking landscape, echoing ideas and thoughts that have come to define Plano Nacional das Artes:

“For culture is not a luxury of the privileged, but a fundamental necessity of every man and every community. Culture does not exist to decorate life, but rather for its transformation – so that men can build and built themselves in conscience, in truth, in liberty, and in justice. If men are capable of creating revolution it is only because they are capable of creating culture. As Amílcar Cabral said, quoted by Manuel Alegre a few days ago: *revolution is an act of culture*”.

(Breyner 1975b, 1153).

¹ The Constituent Assembly was elected on the 25th of April of 1975 with the sole responsibility to draft a new Constitution following the overthrowing of Estado Novo's dictatorship by the *Carnation Revolution*.

Her words, especially the adage *culture does not exist to decorate life, but rather for its transformation*, are often cited by Paulo Pires do Vale (commissioner of PNA) and the latter was even included in PNA's presentation film. There is a common dialect, a dialogue that crosses time and space, between Sophia's intentions and PNA's conception, a shared belief in the emancipatory potential of art and culture as means for societal, communal, and personal *revolution*. If there is a primordial figure from which PNA inherited its constitutional mission is without question Sophia de Mello Breyner.

Another figure that I would be remissive not to mention is Madalena Perdigão. A discreet figure, Madalena's impact in contemporary Portugal's cultural and educational landscape is quite substantial. She held key positions in Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (FCG), most notably she was responsible for the creation and development of the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Choir and Ballet company. Her latter work in the development of the ACARTE service and the creation of the CAI (Children's Art Centre) reflected her ideas on arts and education, on creativity and transdisciplinarity, as well as her relationship with the ideals of the international movement of education through art. (Teixeira 2014, 9-14).

However, what truly connects her with PNA is her tenure as director of the "Coordinating Office for Artistic Education" of the Ministry of Education², during which she presided a commission that devised and presented the *Plano Nacional de Educação Artística* (henceforth referred to as PNEA³), (Perdigão 1981, 299), the first time that the concepts of art and education were officially presented together. (Santos 1989, 41). This programme focused on three main objectives: recognition of artistic learning in higher education; the application of the regionalisation principle to secondary school and higher education; and the adoption of education through art in Portugal's education system. In these we again find common threads that connect PNEA and PNA: a shared set of principles and concepts that have been reflected and refracted over time. These are quite visible when one considers PNEA's views on the transdisciplinary role that art education plays in all educational levels, on the role of teachers which "in the ideal situation, all of these (teachers), and not just some, would be educators through art", (Perdigão 1981, 301); on regionalisation as a process that should recentre schools within their local cultural and social landscape, "including traditional popular and classic origin heritage,

² She held that position from 1978 to 1984. (Teixeira 2014, 61).

³ In late November of 1979 PNEA was presented for review to multiple stakeholders in both the cultural and educational field. (Perdigão 1981, 299).

the environment, the economic situation and the social transformations”, (Perdigão 1981, 301), in order to “prevent the school from divorcing its community”, (Perdigão 1981, 301), as a process rooted in a community’s past but focused on the present and future; and on the interdisciplinary nature of arts and their full-fledged integration with all the other discipline’s curricula. (Perdigão 1981, 305).

Other personalities have contributed if not so directly to PNA’s cultural thinking landscape, such as the pedagogue Arquimedes da Silva Santos who affirmed that education through art as essentially regarding the formation of personality and that it “(education through art) unravels as a continuous and ascending journey (...)”. (Santos 1989, 31). Arquimedes was also one of the founders of the Portuguese Movement for Artistic Intervention and Education through Art in 1994, alongside Lucília Valente, Alberto de Sousa, Fernanda Canelhas, Graziela Gomes, Augusta Silva e Helena Ferraz. (Moeva n.d.).

Throughout the decades since the 1974 Revolution Portugal has seen a few governmental proposals and plans that delve into problematics shared with PNA, namely in the intersection between art, heritage, culture and education. The first of which I mentioned above, PNEA, unfortunately never came to fruition and was dismissed following Madalena Perdigão’s departure from the Ministry of Education. Other initiatives include the creation of a contact group between the Ministry of Education and of Culture in 1997 aimed at developing measures for the “interconnection between artistic education policies and arts promotion and sensibilisation policies”, (Ministérios da Educação e da Cultura 1997, 11047), focusing on art and education, teacher formation and the professional cultural and artistic landscape. (*Ibid*). In 2003 another work group was created to study and propose measures for the articulation of the Ministry of Education with the Ministry of Culture, especially targeting the relationship between the school community – teachers and students– and cultural heritage, focusing on teacher formation, youth sensibilisation, connection between heritage institutions and schools, and the reinforcement of museums’ educational structures. (Ministérios da Educação e da Cultura 2003, 17701). Most recently, in 2014, we witnessed the creation of the Project Group for the National Strategy for Education and Culture (GPNEC). In the preamble of the legal dispatch for its creation GPNEC references questions not yet risen in previous proposals, such as citizenship, lifelong learning, or “(...) complying with the constitutional imperatives of democratising citizen’s access to education and culture”. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros e

Ministérios das Finanças e da Educação e Ciência 2014, 29942). This project was placed under the tutelage of the governmental bodies responsible for education and for culture and aimed mainly to increase and further the presence of artistic and cultural activities in all levels of compulsory education⁴. GPENEC developed the *Portal of Cultural Experiences* which sought to establish a closer relationship between schools and cultural institutions, in order to record students' cultural experiences to then produce a *cultural biography* of each one. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros e Ministérios das Finanças e da Educação e Ciência 2014, 29943). Lastly, I should mention the *Cultural Footprint: Arts and Education* programme: a DGArtes and Norway Arts Council partnership initiative, co-financed by EEA Grants 2009-2014, which promoted art and education projects. These were developed in a three-way partnership between artistic entities from Portugal and one of the EEA Grants donor states⁵, and Portuguese schools, aiming at furthering the relationship between educational communities and the cultural sector, in order to promote sustainable artistic projects for the future. Launched between 2013 and 2014, this programme supported 9 art education projects in Portugal. (Direção-Geral das Artes n.d.).

Despite successfully implementing some of the measures recommended or accomplishing some of the proposed objectives, the truth is that none of these programmes and proposals had a lasting effect. They were ultimately unable to affect real change either on the education system, the cultural landscape, or the overall national imaginary. One can only speculate on what might have hindered the success of these projects, maybe it was a change in government or a shift in which political party holds power or the departure of the key figure at the helm of the project, or maybe a combination of all of the above. Or even maybe none of them.

Other relevant shifts in Portugal's recent educational public policies have furthered the role of artistic and cultural experience in education, an ecosystem to which PNA was also brought into. I must mention the Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling, approved in 2018, which centres on the values and competences that students are expected to have by the conclusion of their compulsory education. It aims at promoting inclusive learning curricula that focuses on active citizenship and creative thinking, to which it

⁴ From first grade to the end of secondary school or 12th grade.

⁵ These states are Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein.

acknowledges the importance of developing the skill of aesthetic and artistic sensibility where art and aesthetics are both means and end. Last but not least, decrees regarding inclusive education, citizenship learning, and curriculum flexibility have opened the possibilities for schools to develop more local cultural and social specific curricula with which art education proposals can be articulated. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 13).

In early 2019 Paulo Pires do Vale was invited by Graça Fonseca (Minister of Culture of Portugal) to head a new governmental project titled *Plano Nacional das Artes*. PNA had been in the works for some time by then. It was first announced in the State Budget of 2018 and 2019, under Cultural policies as proposal for the “creation of an integrated plan for citizen access to all cultural areas, where the Plano Nacional das Artes will function in articulation with the Plano Nacional de Leitura and Plano Nacional de Cinema”. (Ministério das Finanças 2018, 133). It was also detailed in Graça Fonseca’s address to Parliament on October 30th, where the minister stated that “together, Culture and Education, highlight the importance of an inclusive education where art is a key factor in stimulating, integrating, and affirming an educational policy closer to artistic creation, (...) This is one of the great commitments of public cultural policies”. (Fonseca 2018).

Following Paulo Pires do Vale’s acceptance to assume the position of Commissioner and the recommendation for Sara Brighenti and Nuno Pólvora to assume the positions of Deputy Commissioners, the Minister’s Council resolution of 21 of February of 2019 which presented the guiding lines for PNA was approved, coming into effect on the 1st of March of 2019. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros 2019, 1390).

And so, Plano Nacional das Artes’s journey officially began.

2.1. Mission, team, and structure

“Revolução cultural não é eu poder ir tocar a mais sítios;
Revolução cultural é eu ir aos sítios e encontrar música de lá.”
(Zeca Afonso n.d.⁶)

“PNA promotes social change, mobilizing the educational power
of the arts and heritage in the lives of citizens:
for all and with everyone.”
(Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 16)

O que é a Arte? Nada.
O que quer? Tudo.
O que pode? Alguma coisa.
(Change is Good and Moheymany 2019)

On the 18th of June of 2019, a few months following the approval of PNA’s guidelines resolution, Plano Nacional das Artes was officially presented at the Victor Cordon Studios of the Companhia Nacional de Bailado, in Lisbon. Paulo Pires do Vale unveiled the mint *Plano Nacional das Artes: a strategy, a manifesto* in the company of both deputy commissioners, the ministers of Education and of Culture, a host of guests and personalities, and several media outlets. A strategy “for all and with everyone” (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 16), which upholds that “arts have a fundamental role in respecting diversity, difference, the other, the preservation of heritage, and in the promotion of an aesthetic attitude of fruition” (Pires do Vale 2019), and that is partnered by the PNL, the PNC, the PEEA, the RBE, the RPM and the National Sound Archive.

In order to detail PNA’s mission let us begin by looking into the legal text that materialised it. The resolution that defined PNA’s guidelines starts by recognising the “potential of arts, in the multiplicity of its manifestations, to cultivate the respect for diversity, liberty, personal expression, openness to the other, aesthetic valorisation, and heritage preservation (...)” as well as that “education is a privileged medium for the promotion of social justice and equal opportunities”. (Presidência do Conselho de

⁶ This quote is popularly attributed to Zeca Afonso and is mentioned in several places but I was unable to find any original reference.

Ministros 2019, 1390). We start to recognise the differences that set PNA apart from previous art education proposals and plans: the emphasis on the crucial role that the emancipatory power at the intersection of culture, arts, and education plays in the promotion of social change.

PNA is hereby responsible for the coordination of the cultural education offer, integrating existing plans and programmes⁷, guided by the principle that asserts arts as a structural ever-present element in every school level and discipline curricula. Furthermore, the resolution assumes as objectives the promotion of access to all citizens to cultural and artistic creation and fruition; the territorialisation of art education projects, articulating local schools, universities, cultural institutions, artistic entities, private companies, and socio-political agents; the bridging of school educators, artists, and cultural agents in view of both the integration of artistic and aesthetic languages in the curricula and the cultivation of an openness to the community; and the connection of artists and cultural institutions, raising awareness to the social and educational dimensions of their practice. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros 2019, 1390).

Most of these principles and objectives are furthered in PNA's manifesto. But for now, let us take a moment to look attentively and appreciate the detail and the thought that went into creating a programme which so strongly reflects the idea of duality: reflexion and action; form and content. When we look and read into details such as the venue of presentation, the design of PNA's logo or the directing of the presentation video we begin to discern the fundamental premises and ideas that form the backbone of what the executive committee envisioned. Paulo Pires do Vale explained better, as often is the case. He said on the choice of a dance rehearsal room as the venue for PNA's presentation that it "reflects how we intend to construct this Plan. That is, PNA is not finished, nor will it ever be without the shaping and moulding of each and every local agent. That is why we did not present it on stage, but rather in a place of rehearsal. For us, that experience of rehearsal, of constructing collectively, of understanding and being in the process is a fundamental thread of the Plano Nacional das Artes" (Pires do Vale 2020a).

⁷ Namely the PNL, PNC, PNEEA, RBE and RPM. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros 2019, 1390).



Figure 1 – Paulo Pires do Vale, commissioner of Plano Nacional das Artes presents its manifesto. Lisbon, June 18th, 2019, © Graça Castanheira. Accessed on the 2nd of November of 2021 at: <https://www.facebook.com/PlanoNacionalArtes/photos/543280596076620>

This premise of a living entity, of an object in perpetual mutation, one that is in constant evolution, that not only welcomes change but truly embraces it, is a defining trait of PNA. As Sara Brighenti (deputy commissioner of PNA) said, it “(...) does not exist within a hermetic shape, it is alike to a living organism in mutation, which adapts from one place to the other, one that takes shape and identity as it is appropriated by local agents”. (Brighenti 2020). It is somewhat reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic concept of *assemblages*, as the increase of a multiplicity’s dimensions inevitably alters its nature as it expands its connections. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 8).

Another crucial premise emerges when one attentively looks and ponders on the conception of PNA’s logo, presentation film, or manifesto: the indissociable unity between form and content. We again resort to Paulo Pires do Vale’s words as he reiterates the specific intentions that framed the Change is Good’s design of the PNA logo:

“The logo would indicate what the Plan is. The logo is something without the desire for perfection. Each letter is different, and each stripe has a different size and is shaped in a unique way. And in turn, they are all working for the same goal which the creation of that phrase. On the other hand, there is an empty place at the centre. This empty space is fundamental. We believe that in the artistic experience the relationship between spectator and work of art

implies that same creation of a centre, an empty place where something can happen. It is also there that each of us can enter”.
(Pires do Vale 2020a).

It speaks to the power of design as a divergent language, a way of relating with the world through plasticity and visuality, one that broadens and deepens aesthetical sensibility. Moreover, it speaks to the unexpected spaces of untapped potential that arise from the interdisciplinary relationship between arts, culture, and education.



Figure 2 – Paulo Pires do Vale and the Plano Nacional das Artes’ logo projected behind him. © Tiago Lemos/PÚBLICO. Accessed on November the 2nd, 2021, at: <https://www.publico.pt/2020/06/18/culturaipsilon/noticia/plano-nacional-artes-chegou-20-mil-alunos-ano-atividade-1921041>

These details unveil the distinction between PNA and previous plans and proposals. But what truly sets it apart? What really makes the difference? I think that firstly, PNA’s mission even though it arises from the Constitution in truth moves beyond it. It moves past cultural democratisation towards cultural democracy, from *cultural consumption* to *cultural commitment*, one that “does not bring culture into a territory because culture already exists in every territory: it values local culture and complements it with other cultural expressions, opening up local experience to the universal (...)”. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 6). Or how the acclaimed Portuguese protest songwriter Zeca Afonso said “Cultural revolution is not to go play there, is to go there and listen to music from there”. (Zeca Afonso, n.d.).

Secondly, it looks beyond the school limits, upholding the view that “it takes a village to raise a children”. (Pires do Vale 2021c). It presents a systematic approach that is focused not in placing the effort to bring about social change through arts and culture solely in the school communities, as often is the case, but rather in creating intricate local communities - connecting schools, universities, cultural institutions, artistic entities, private companies, and socio-political agents.

This view, of culture in the plural, translates to the last idea I would like to point out: not to think disciplinarily. By which I mean that PNA is of a fundamental transdisciplinary⁸ nature because it can be defined as a knowledge production process in which multiple “discipline perspectives transcend each other to form a new holistic approach” (Caldwell 2015). It is built upon the belief that arts and culture are intrinsically not disciplined – neither in being *well behaved* nor in accepting a single language (logico-verbal or mathematical) or rigid disciplines. They reveal different worldviews and multiple transdisciplinary languages: inclusive possibilities for relating with the world through plasticity, body, voice, or sound. They should have no one place, no one discipline, but in turn be as in a rhizome – trickling everywhere and connecting everything in a multiplicity of ways. As Paulo Pires do Vale argued “arts, heritage, and culture are essential for aesthetical sensibility, for emotional sensitivity, for creative capacity, and for critical thinking: for the totality of human dimensions - the body and the emotions”. (Pires do Vale 2021c).

The transdisciplinary nature of Plano Nacional das Artes further extends to the composition of its executive committee and overall team. As I have mentioned before, the executive committee is headed by Paulo Pires do Vale – professor, essayist, and curator; and by two deputy commissioners, Sara Brighenti – museologist, cultural programmer, and art education coordinator; and Nuno Pólvora⁹ - lawyer, music teacher, and public cultural institutions’ administration specialist. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros 2019, 1392). The committee is responsible for identifying the priorities and for the execution of PNA’s strategic action plan, as well as having the fundamental role of (re)presenting PNA and its manifesto around the country to multiple stakeholders and

⁸ Transdisciplinary research is a “comprehensive, multiperspective, problem- and solution-oriented approach that transcends disciplinary boundaries and bridges science and practice”. (Hoffmann, Pohl, and Hering 2017).

⁹ Nuno Pólvora left the position of deputy commissioner of the Plano Nacional das Artes on March 31st, 2020.

communities. It also is tasked with structuring the team's intervention in PNA's different areas, being present and often directly involved in the kick-off of new initiatives and projects, as such Paulo Pires do Vale and Sara Brighenti are directly involved with every aspect of the Plano's action. They hold ultimate responsibility over PNA's action.

The overall team is rather small, and one might say that it is stretched thin throughout all of the areas of the Plan. Most team members work in multiple areas and share in on a variety of responsibilities. This translates to a collective work environment, where despite the executive committee's ultimate word there is a shared decision-making process in several measures and projects. It also means that most areas of PNA, save perhaps to a certain extent the school specific measures, do not work autonomously. Despite the potential for lesser efficiency of such organizational logic, it nonetheless has the advantage, particularly in PNA's early stages, of producing a coherent and cohesive approach transversal all of its areas of actionability.

The overall team can be divided under three groups: technical team, allocated schoolteachers, and other staff. The technical team, as determined by the Minister's Council resolution is composed of two senior technician, one assistant technician (which for the duration of my internship was never assigned), and one operational technician.

The two senior technicians are Maria Amélia Fernandes, a distinguished specialist in heritage and museums, and Maria Emanuel Albergaria, a former schoolteacher with an extensive career in art education and museum-community mediation. Maria Amélia has been involved in almost all of PNA's projects and initiatives, providing crucial assistance and producing key research and reports on multiple measures. From June 2020 to July 2021 she assumed a distinct role at the request of the Minister of Culture, serving as liaison for PNA in the production team for the *All I Want. Portuguese Women Artists from 1900 to 2020*¹⁰ exhibition, organized as part of the Cultural Programme of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union¹¹. Maria Emanuel is responsible for a significant portion of the adherent schools, not only those in the Portuguese Autonomous

¹⁰ This exhibition was inaugurated on the 1st of June of 2021 at the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, in Lisbon. It reunited and presented "two hundred works of art from 40 Portuguese women artists created between the start of the 20th century and our days". (All I Want - Portuguese Women Artists from 1900 to 2020 n.d.).

¹¹ Maria Amélia Fernandes has since returned fulltime to the execution of PNA's measures.

Regions (Azores and Madeira¹²) but also others in continental Portugal, as well as playing a key role in all education related measures. She is also responsible for communication strategy and execution, and in assisting the executive committee in reaching out and connecting with cultural institutions and artistic entities. The operational technician, Carla Augusto, arrived in January 2020. Her work revolves around the administrative requirements for the successful functioning of PNA within the public administration bureaucracy.

By allocated schoolteachers I mean that Maria João Tudela and Maria João Bravo even though still in their respective school's administrative books, have been assigned to the PNA. Tudela is a visual arts teacher and Bravo is a mathematics teacher. Not looking only for visual arts or other artistic discipline teacher is a sign of the transdisciplinary view of the executive committee, to whom it is crucial to have a team with different competences, capacities, and experiences, all which must be grounded in an acute cultural and aesthetic sensitivity. In February 2020 Maria Luísa Oliveira joined the team, she is a schoolteacher that had previously worked as General Director of School Administration (DGAE). She mainly took up the responsibilities of directing the PNA Academy, contributing also to other educational measures and projects.

Then there is the *other staff*, which concerns the rest of the team (in which I was included), who did not have a defined position. This *other* essentially regarded short-term employment relations or internships, in my case. During my internship – October 2019 to April 2020 – I worked with António Cardoso Pinto and with Vassilia van der Heyden who were cultural projects consultants. António worked mainly in the application for the EEA Grants with Porta 33¹³ for the Cultural Policy Think Tank in the island of Porto Santo (Madeira), as well as contributing to other measures. Vassilia had a less specific project, instead she was involved in various projects and gave key contributions for communication, team organization and other measures, such as the Cultural Organisations' Social Impact Bond (CISOC) or the PNA Festival.

¹²This is due to Maria Emanuel Albergaria being Azorean and having extensive connections with the Autonomous Region's cultural institutions, school system, and local agents. By extension it made sense that she also be made responsible for Madeira's adherent schools.

¹³“A PORTA33 - Associação Quebra Costas, Centro de Arte Contemporânea, foi fundada no Funchal (ilha da Madeira), em 1989, como associação cultural (...) enquanto lugar-laboratório de formação e criação visa a articulação Realização Humana-Desenvolvimento Sustentável, pelo implemento de múltiplas práticas artísticas e pedagógicas enraizadas no território e na sua comunidade”. (“Escola Do Porto Santo” n.d.).

Additionally, the Ministers Council resolution that drew the guidelines for PNA also included the formation of Scientific Committee, headed by Maria de Assis – a notable figure with an extensive résumé on art education projects¹⁴. This committee is tasked with supporting PNA’s mission of articulating the existing cultural education plans and programmes, as such it is composed by the PNL commissary, the PNC coordinator, the PEEA (Aesthetic and Artistic Education Program¹⁵) coordinator, the RBE coordinator, the RPM coordinator and, obviously, the PNA executive committee. (Gabinetes da Secretaria de Estado da Cultura e da Educação 2019, 13328).

2.2. A manifesto, a strategy, and an internship

“Plano Nacional das Artes: a manifesto, a strategy: 2019-2024” is the *holy text* that holds the totality of PNA’s “cosmology”: its portico, its values and premises, its objectives, its strategic principles, and its strategic action plan. It is a comprehensive and complete body of work that encapsulates the fundamental theoretical and conceptual views which sustain this nationwide multifaceted actionable plan.

However, running the risk of being remissive in earnestly looking into any of the elements I mention above, or of being laboriously exhausting by enumerating and speaking on each of those, or even worse, of having this part of the report be reduced to a basic “copy past”, I would rather let PNA’s manifesto speak for itself. As such, the above-mentioned elements of PNA manifesto will be annexed to this report¹⁶ as I, on the other hand, will look to present the fundamental lines of thought that predicate this document, as well as reflect from my internship experience – from October 2019 to April 2020 - on the most relevant parts of the strategic action plan.

¹⁴ Maria de Assis has been for the last decades a key figure in the art education field in Portugal, most notably through her work within Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, where she created and directed the 10x10 programme. This programme, between 2012 and 2017, aimed to foster the collaboration between artists and teachers in order to produce new and effective learning strategies based on artistic practice. She has also been responsible for Lisbon’s Municipality DESCOLA programme, promoting creative projects and initiatives for students and teachers. (Lusa 2019).

¹⁵ Despite the possible naming similarities this programme is not to be confused with PNA. PEEA shares important ideas and areas of action with PNA but unlike the former it is focused exclusively within the school environment and is oriented for the Preschool and Primary Education. (“Educação Estética e Artística” n.d.).

¹⁶ See Appendix A.

The ideas, premises and values of this manifesto can, I believe, be thought of as answers to a question: what can we become through an aesthetical sensitivity born out of cultural and artistic creation and fruition? I am refereeing to the many “we”: ourselves, our school, our community, our country.

Ourselves, because arts and culture act as a signifier of an emotional and knowledgeable collective archaeology through which we become self. We construct and are constructed in this shared dialogue with our tangible and intangible heritage, and our cultural and artistic manifestations. These are indispensable aspects of life, as Nehru once said, “Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit” (Nehru 2004, 212). Or as the extravagant Mr. Keating of “Dead Poets Society” fabulously played by Robin Williams affirmed:

“We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. Medicine, law, business, engineering, these are all noble pursuits, and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for”.
(Weir 1989).

Paulo Pires do Vale is quick to affirm when talking about PNA that what arts and culture can teach us is a lesson in gratuity. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 19). “So frequently despised, this character of pleasure for pleasure’s sake, of that ludic, playful experience as each one’s construction of autonomy and freedom, that pleasure, is essential in the relation with artistic expressions and manifestations. We want to say and highlight it”. (Pires do Vale 2020a).

It is this emancipatory power which is recognised in arts and culture that shines a light on an educational system and a society that so often ignores the multiplicity of languages through which we can express ourselves. Plano Nacional das Artes defends that inclusiveness arises from artistic expressions and cultural manifestations representing alternative, contrasting languages that allow us to speak, comprehend, listen, and process our surroundings, our communities, even ourselves, through sensorial and sensitive relations with plasticity, body, voice, touch, or sound. It proposes that it is through an *undisciplined* and transdisciplinary educational system that embraces this disruptive potential of the arts, culture, and heritage, and through a society that acknowledges the multiple ways one can express himself and which values play, contemplation and discovery, that we are able to promote aesthetic sensibility, critical thinking, and

creativity for an increasingly uncertain future. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 19-20).

This is an endless effort, a *never-quite-there* journey, a perpetual motion in which we stand on the *shoulders* of those that came before us and in which we will in turn be stood on by those that come after us. This is of the infinite tasks.

“Knowledge of heritage and the arts provides us with a historical awareness and inscribes us as part of an infinite task—which we receive as a legacy that we should renew for the future. We are part of a community and joint effort that precedes and succeeds us”.

(Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 21).

I believe these are the fundamental concepts and ideas that are at the foundation the Plano Nacional das Artes' manifesto. These have been poured and synthesized in PNA's strategic action plan, which was designed in three axis of action:

Axis A - *Cultural Policy* aims to “create structural, political and legislative conditions that promote the cultural commitment of people, organisations and communities. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 28). In this axis we find measures and projects that act on the premises of cultural democracy and systemic thinking. These measures are transversal to the whole of society – from private companies, to universities, local government, cultural institutions, and families.

The *Organizations Cultural Impact Index (IICO)* seeks to reproduce the methodology applied for environmental impact assessment but instead apply it to gauge every type of organization's relationship with arts and heritage. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 29).

The *Municipal Strategic Plan for Culture-Education (PEM.CE)* aims to provide training for the local cultural professionals and to guide municipalities in the creation of plans that are committed to produce a long-term strategy promoting projects in the intersection between arts, heritage, and education. During my internship, this measure was advanced through development of a methodology for municipalities and their cultural professionals by Manuel Gama, an investigator at University of Minho, as well as through several presentations to mayors throughout the country.

The *Cultural Organizations' Social Impact Bond (CISOC)*, another notable measure, aims at “creating an educational and social impact bond between the Ministry of Culture

and the structures governed and supported by it”, (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 29), promoting social adherence to cultural projects and diversifying audiences. I was involved in this measure as I helped research similar European projects, looking into successful initiatives that could help PNA design a regulation for this bond.

One of the most ambitious measures proposed in this axis is the *Cultural ID*. It is actually quite simple in conception, but its successful application would mean a great deal. It is aimed at creating a sort of *cultural passport* for students, a log where one registers one's visit to a museum or attendance to dance performance. The great breakthrough is that it is then supposed to be considered in a student's curricula and evaluation, not only for compulsory education but also for higher education. Ensuring that cultural and artistic creation and fruition are thus seen as essential components in one's personal and academic development.

Other measures under this axis are the *Public Funding of Art-Education-Community* – a funding measure for projects in this intersection; the furthering of *Legislation* on cultural policy – namely, the patronage law and laws on copyrights; and lastly, the *Business Organisations' Cultural Commitment* – aimed at ensuring “the participation and support of businesses in culture and the arts in their region, their Km2”. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 30).

The Axis B - *Empowerment* aims to “(...) disseminate critical reflection on the areas of PNA; invest in the initial and continuous training of (...) educators, mediators and artists; and provide training in the use of questioning pedagogies that promote self-discovery”. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 31). This axis can be viewed as twofold strategy that on one hand seeks to promote the idea of not thinking disciplinarily, focusing on interdisciplinarity and on undisciplining school curricula and teaching, while on the other it looks beyond the school limits, aspiring to promote lifelong learning and contributing to disseminate critical thinking on areas of PNA.

The *Porto Santo School* is a proposal for establishing in a former primary school (designed by the Portuguese architect Chorão Ramalho) in Porto Santo, Madeira, a programme of residencies of knowledge dedicated to the critical reflection and research on “culture and education: artistic pedagogical content, contexts and practices”. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 32). This project relied mostly on António Cardoso Pinto's work and in the partnership Porta 33, a local cultural association.

The most relevant measure in this axis is the *PNA Academy*. It seeks to ensure that teachers, mediators, and informal educators receive training in crossing arts, heritage, and education. It means that PNA recognises its responsibility in investing in the cultural and artistic enrichment of these educators, promoting training courses that demonstrate the interdisciplinary and undisciplined nature of arts and heritage. I was directly involved in the kick-off of this measure, having prepared the dossiers of the first certified teacher training proposals. This was a very interesting experience where I was able to come to contact with artists and mediators that through their proposals married subjects which at first sight might have come across as a bit weird, a bit far-fetched, but that evidently were not. Such proposals are not exclusive to PNA, they have been built on the work of institutions such as FCG's Modern Art Centre Educative Services. These course proposals, such as *Art and Math* – in which Simão Palmeirim helps teachers create connections between arts and mathematics from the work of the Portuguese artist Almada Negreiros, or “Árvore dos Patrimónios” – in which Susana Bicho invites teachers to discover methodologies that connect heritage and affection, are excellent examples of the benefits that we can harvest from not thinking mono-disciplinarily. (Plano Nacional das Artes n.d.). As Luísa Oliveira arrived on the team and took charge this project I was remained involved but only in the communication part, being responsible for preparing and uploading the content related to each course and proposal to PNA's website.

The *Heritage and Arts in Educational Courses* is another measure, albeit on a smaller scale, dedicated to introducing heritage and arts in teacher training. The only difference is that this proposal is aimed at future teachers rather than at present ones. It looks to introduce these subjects in higher school education courses' curricula. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 32).

Other measures in this axis are the *PNA Collections* – a collection of fundamental texts in the intersection of arts, heritage, and education; the *PNA Scholarships* – a scholarship dedicated to support critical research in art, education, and community; and the *Conferences* – which focus on reflecting and disseminating key concepts of PNA.

Axis C - *Education and Access* is divided in three: I. *Undisciplining School*; II. *Km²: Art and Community*; and III. *Communicate 360°*. This axis looks to “guarantee access to the arts for all citizens, encouraging the (...) participation of all; propose the presence of the arts in schools in diverse ways, (...) considering local, different communities and the agents who work there; and promote their existence”. (Plano Nacional das Artes'

Executive Committee 2019, 33). This axis is lengthier than the other two, probably because it focuses on a combination of all PNA's core ideas, encompassing actions that contribute to foster cultural democracy, which look in but also beyond the school and that definitely do not reflect any disciplinary thinking. A multifaceted approach that from the educational system branches out to promote cultural and artistic creation and fruition.

I. *Undisciplining School* aims to “connect school, curriculum, content, territory, community, heritage and local culture”. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 34). This programme is very concretely directed to the school system, presenting a series of proposals that represent a true shift in Portugal's pedagogic landscape.

Let us begin by looking into the most advanced and arguably most relevant PNA measure, the *School Cultural Project (PCE)*. There more to it than what meets the eye. As the name suggests it is a proposal for the creation of a school specific cultural project to which, upon demonstrations of interest by the director and enrolment in PNA's school network, a coordinator is appointed. This PCE coordinator, guided by one of PNA's allocated teachers is responsible for both creating a PCE advisory committee, a democratic body involving the entire local cultural and educational community: students, parents, cultural institutions, artists or artistic entities, local governmental representatives and any other relevant local stakeholder as well as developing the cultural project itself. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 35). Now, what exactly is this project? No one knows. No, really, I know, it seems a bit confusing. Let me explain. So, what the Plan is looking for, what starts this process of joining PNA's network is a key concept that Paulo Pires do Vale frequently refers to, the *pedagogy of desire*. (Pires do Vale 2021b). What it looks for is exactly that desire, interest, and intent from the school, for that must be the point of departure for a reflection with the school community on what issue or question they want to address. This is a mediated relationship emerging from the school's own km², one that does not exclude worldviews, but that would rather observe them through a lenses of proximity. The objective is to promote a creative and critical response that arises from a sensory and sensitive relation with arts, heritage, and culture.

This is by far the measure that has seen the most progress, with PNA having received request from more than sixty schools or school groups to integrate the network. I had the chance to personally observe these projects in different schools, taking part in Maria João Tudela's visits. In a school in Almada we met with the school's PCE coordinator where we discussed and reflected on the coordinator's proposals for the cultural project – ideas

that departed from local heritage, such as exploring students' affection towards a 19th century water wheel that was part of their school landscape, or from a connection with the community, such as photography project that reflected on the industrial past of their territory in an intergenerational exchange with local senior citizens. In another school, in Seixal, I took part in two PCE advisory committee's meetings which were very representative of the local community, involving students, local cultural institutions, parents' association, and local government officials. These acted as a collective assembly to reflect on what issues could be approached through the cultural project.

Another notable measure of PNA's strategic action plan is the *Artist in Residence (PAR)*, which seeks to establish an artistic residence in schools in PNA's network. The intention is that these artists are contracted and when possible given their own space in the school grounds, with the mission to undiscipline, to "disrupt", to transform the school community. The artists are expected to be integral to the school's PCE, as well as introducing "artistic processes and practices to the curriculum, pedagogy and didactics, with regard to management of content and skills and methodologies used". (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 35). As Paulo has stated, PNA "trusts in the artistic processes and in the artists for the transformation of reality, in particular the reality of education". (Pires do Vale 2021c). This led to more than twenty artists taking up residence in schools around the country, from the continent to Azores and Madeira. I was involved in this project in designing the first version of the regulation for the artists' application, seeking to create a recognisable methodology for the selection of artistic proposals for this measure.

The *Citizenship: Do It – Teaching Resources* is a measure which aims to create digital cultural pedagogic resources that intersect arts, heritage, and education, demonstrating their transdisciplinary nature, and making them available in PNA's website. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 35). This measure rapid and unexpectedly assumed a crucial role in PNA's action plan as the covid-19 pandemic hit. It was hastily reoriented, shifting its focus from ordering artists' resources to a team internet wide harvest of digital cultural and artistic pedagogic resources that could serve the quarantined students, families, teachers, and citizens, hoping to despite the unimaginable situation still pursue the mission of ensuring everyone's right to cultural and artistic creation and fruition. I was heavily involved in this project's readjustment, participating in the general search and presentation of resources, scouting cultural

institutions' webpages, podcasts, art pedagogic proposals, and YouTube channels. Furthermore, I was also tasked with preparing the content – thumbnails, description, and links – and with its upload to PNA's website. It was a recurring task that required from the team a lot of adaptability, but one that I believe offered to many a way to keep pursuing aesthetic and cultural learning and to creatively explore our collective forced confinement.

Other measures under the I. *Undisciplining School* are the *Diversion: Go out to come in* – which aims that every class under the PCE have an activity outside of school each term; the *Open* – which seeks to open the schools to the community by programming in-school activities and to rethink learning methodologies; and *Creative Tutoring* – which focuses in creating artistic and creative tools and strategies that contribute for inclusion. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 35).

II. *Km²: Art and Community* aims to “give a voice to people, organisations and communities, making them accountable for their cultural km²; contribute to territorial recognition and cohesion; promote projects of cocreation between artists and communities (...)”. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 36). It could be viewed as PNA's commitment to the principle of territorialisation and that of social inclusion, attempting to affect change in these areas through dissemination of good practices, awarding impactful projects, and creating interwoven cultural, artistic, and social ecosystems.

The most developed measure is the *PNA Festival/Biennial* which is to be a nationwide festival that in partnership with PNA's institutional partners presents activities, performances, and exhibitions on the themes of art-education and art-community. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 36). This project was advanced through the work of Vassilia van der Heyden, Maria Amélia Fernandes, and deputy-commissioner Sara Brighenti, albeit disrupted by the pandemic, I believe it is expected for 2023.

Other measures are the *Project Move: Creative Field* – aimed at creating residencies for higher education students in the arts to develop art-community-education proposals in peripheric territories and in alienated social contexts; the *Project Create +* – promotes projects of social inclusion and cohesion through artistic and cultural proposals; and *PNA Award* – focused on awarding art-education and art-community projects which reflect PNA's values. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 36).

III. *Communicate 360°* seeks to “design and implement PNA’s Communication Plan; create a platform for the dissemination and mapping of artistic and cultural proposals (...) teaching resources; (...) and catalogue the existing programme of cultural and artistic education”. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 37). These objectives were for the most part successfully accomplished. I was present and heavily involved in this programme’s only two measures.

First, the *PNA Portal and Newsletter* which seeks to create a robust online platform/website to respond to the objectives mentioned above. I was responsible for creating the website hierarchic structure and present it in meetings with the engineering teams that we met for its ordering. Unfortunately, due to budget constrains the money allocated for it was no longer available, and PNA had to adapt. Meaning that a less complex and expensive website had to be created. That is where I come in. I had no knowledge of how to do it. The answer turns out was a lot (and I mean a lot) of YouTube hours. I created the website and became responsible for its maintenance and content uploading. PNA’s website hosts not only all of the manifesto, but more importantly the PNA School Network, mapped and identified, the PNA Academy, with courses and details, and the Educational Resources, where one can find a plethora of artistic and cultural pedagogic resources directed at the various levels of education. I was also co-responsible for the implementation and execution of PNA’s newsletters.

The other measure *Be Present* is focused on designing a communication plan, in establishing relationships with media outlets, and with the PNA’s presence on social media. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 37). I also shared in multiple responsibilities in this area as one of the team members, along with Maria Emanuel Albergaria, Vassilia van der Heyden, and deputy-commissioner Sara Brighenti, who helped produced create communication strategies and initiatives.

Additionally, I was also involved in the work of the CCPNA alongside Maria de Assis, namely in the production and presentation of database information regarding PNA’s school network geographical distribution. In CCPNA we began to develop an interesting methodology to articulate and connect cultural-educational offer, starting from the schools that had already joined at least three or more of the scientific commission’s plans and programmes, to make them flagbearers in the promotion of theses offers in their territory.

Plano Nacional das Artes' strategic action plan schedule was severely disrupted by the covid-19 pandemic. Many were the measures that had to be delayed, many others already at some level of execution had to be thoroughly reorientated and adapted for the cold blue-lighted digital, remote, and alienated reality. In the fourth chapter I will speak on PNA's progresses and adaptations.

For now, however, it is important to look into one last subject while defining PNA. How does a transdisciplinary and undisciplined plan navigate the bureaucracy to which it is so averse? This is the main topic of the next subchapter.

2.3. Navigating bureaucracy

“If there is a style in PNA and there is, I think there is a particular style in PNA to make things happen. It is not just content, we believe from the start that form and content are a unity, and as such, there is a style in how to deal with people, with others and with what we do. Part of it is dusting off this connection to culture and the arts that obviously interests us, and that has also to do with the debureacratized way we like to be and work”.
(Pires do Vale 2021b).

This is Paulo Pires do Vale’s view on PNA’s different way of functioning. As he says, form and content are one, and one that puts so much weight in desire and affection can only work guided by empathy. But what happens if it this concept of *breaking up walls* is constatly met with bureaucratic resistance?

The truth is that much of what makes PNA such an interesting project might be at odds with the rigidity one often finds in public administration. What certainly did not help was the departure of deputy-commissioner Nuno Pólvara, leaving Paulo Pires do Vale and Sara Brighenti – two distinguished professionals that, nonetheless, had no practical knowledge on managing the intricacies of pubic administration’s bureaucracy. Carla Augusto’s arrival helped in organizing affairs and procedures but there was always a lack of hands to deal with everything that PNA’s strategic plan required.

This resulted in PNA facing various challenges, especially due to budgeting and to constrains on public hiring. The latter led to most of the team being composed of people already under contract with the State, which were more easily allocated to PNA. This limited the hiring of people to the team to short-term work relations, which is the case of Vassilia and António. Besides only being permitted to do short-term hirings, PNA faced other adversities due to how long those procedures took to be accepted, processed and executed.

This are bothe reasons and a consequences of the streanous relationship between PNA and DGArtes, with whom it shares offices at Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP). DGArtes is the administrative structure to which the administration of PNA’s bureaucratic requests, procedures and budget management was assigned to. This difficult operational relationship led PNA to look for another structure, and in chapter 4 I will

further explore the Plan's reassessment to GEPAC (Cultural Strategy, Planning and Evaluation Office).

Other bureaucratic adversities have also come up in the relationship with education. For example, PNA's necessity that PCE coordinators are allocated two weekly hours to work on it was at first not very "fondly" looked at by the governmental representatives for education, but came to a successful resolution. On other occasions, the disruptive and indisiplined nature of PNA sometimes leads to some bumps in the road when establishing PCE in schools with rigid directors or teachers.

To sum up, I believe that PNA has had a rough voyage in the tricky waters of public administration's bureacracy. Nonetheless, it seems that those problems have, sooner or later, come to be succesfully resolved. Certainly, experience will bring a progressively easier time in handling these adversities.

3. THE *PRAXIS* OF PLANO NACIONAL DAS ARTES

3.1. Reflecting on all you see

For this chapter, I am following Paulo Freire's adage *praxis requires theory to illuminate it*, as he observed:

“(...) action and reflection: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world. And as praxis, it requires theory to illuminate it. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action (...)”.
(Freire [1970] 2000, 125).

Chapter 3 focuses on the substantiation and materialisation of the theories and concepts that frame my aforementioned proposed definition of Plano Nacional das Artes (see chapter 1. Introduction, 3). In this subchapter I propose to establish those different theoretical lenses, drawing from a multiplicity of fields of study, namely: political science and philosophy (Chantal Mouffe, Pascal Gielen, Gert Biesta, Daniel Olgaard, Dirk Hoyer), philosophy of education (Dennis Atkinson), culture studies (Irit Rogoff, Claire Bishop), critical and literary theory (Jacques Rancière), pedagogic theory (Anne Harris, Noah De Lissovoy, Nadin Kalin), and critical and radical pedagogy (Paulo Freire, Dennis Atkinson).

3.1.1. Utopian literature and the crisis of the social imaginary

“Through the discourse of creativity, the elitist activity of art is democratised, although this leads to business rather than to Beuys”
(Bishop 2012, 14)

“Utopia is on the horizon. I move two steps closer; it moves two steps further away. I walk another ten steps and the horizon runs ten steps further away. As much as I may walk, I'll never reach it. So what's the point of utopia? The point is this: to keep walking.”
(Galeano 1997, 326)

I believe we should begin this reflection by borrowing a question from Fátima Vieira's *The Concept of Utopia*: "Has man lost his capacity to think of alternatives? Is utopia, in fact, finally on the verge of death?". (Vieira 2010, 21).

In the later stage of the 20th century, the internationalisation of heritage and the artistic critique of the 60's, in pursuit of authenticity, self-management and anti-hierarchical structures, (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005), would, the latter more inadvertently than the former, contribute to the development of a "post-Fordist networked economy" (Mouffe 2013, 72), and to the ushering of neoliberal capitalism's liquid and fluid hegemony. (Walsh [1992] 2002) (Bauman 2000). Following the failure of real socialism and Fukuyama's *end of history*, (Fukuyama 1992), we found ourselves in "a situation that joins in a unique epochal knot the failure of all communisms with the misery of new individualisms". (Esposito [1998] 2010, 1).

Neoliberalism became the constructed hegemony of the present. Everyone is expected "to be entrepreneurial, embrace risk, look after their own self-interest, perform their own brands, and be willing to self-exploit". (Bishop 2012, 16). Crystallised by the compression of time and space in the wake of the exponential acceleration of technology, mobility, and finance, times became post-modern, transmodern and post-industrial. (Walsh [1992] 2002) (Gnecco 2015). Individualisation and atomisation have shaped our *always in the present* social life – we have been, as Grant Kester says, "reduced to an atomised pseudocommunity of consumers". (Kester 2004, 29). Projecting any kind of future has become an insurmountable goal against the backdrop of labour precarity. If imagination is a projection of what is to come, then neoliberalism's presentism has paralysed our ability to imagine different futures. "It seems that if the present is to pass favourably, it must hijack the near future". (Vujanović and Cvejić 2016, 36) (Gielen 2017).

Moreover, neoliberalism has extended the logic of capital beyond traditional economic forms. Its hegemony materialises through "an all-encompassing rationality for society that places every process, action, and behaviour under economic measure in the service of market fundamentalism (...)". (Kalin 2018, 23). An ambitious *project* that refracts all spheres of life through the lenses of market economy – education, politics, culture, and social life – commodifying even what is, or more accurately what was, not of economic nature. (Foucault 2008, 243). Its goal is on full display: the reshaping of "governments,

societies, and selves— not just ideologically in favour of the market, but as always themselves agents in markets”. (De Lissovoy 2015, 25).

We are in a “schizophrenic cultural context in which western global economies recognise a need to use educational structures to increase productivity”. (Harris 2014, 58). Bureaucracy, performance assessments, and strict regulations shape the life of schools and teachers, in what Pascal Gielen describes as the *catering regime*, “just as with school meals, education and educational space are now neatly apportioned”. (Gielen 2017, 137). This *regime* has seen a progressive shift towards a pedagogy of austerity which privileges tests, results, competition, and scripted curricula, severely constraining possibilities for real learning. (Kalin 2018, 49) (De Lissovoy 2015, 15). Repetition and rehearsal are the beat to which the drums of knowledge packaged accordingly with market logic march to: “training replacing speculating”. (Rogoff 2014, 4). Even in the pursuit of neoliberalism’s contemporary *fetish* – creativity, or innovation as refashioned for educational discourse, does this austere pedagogy value art education, instead in line with the market logic it (paradoxically) refuses failure and avoids any risky, unproductive, imagination cultivating activity. (Harris 2014, 19). It “represents not only a shift from process to product (outcomes), but also from aesthetics to a capitalist ethics of production”. (Harris 2014, 79) (Salehi 2008, 86).

Austerity is a word that as also come to define the politics of our time. We live in a voracious post-ideological vacuum where there is no space for substantive arguments or alternative futures. Democracy itself is being put under the scope of the fast-paced market logic – its processes too morose, too time wasteful to be accommodated anywhere outside the politico-legislative institutions where, regardless, we witness the dwindling of the public debate. Moreover, the cutbacks on investigative journalism and media outlets’ (often unwilling) indulgence towards financial interests have diminished our collective citizenship. (Gielen 2017, 137) (Harris 2014, 58). Numbers, specialists, and technicians, hailed for their objectivity and efficiency, emerge triumphant amidst a realism and pragmatism that with a *budgetary* iron fist rules (out) any alternative political vision: “Politics has become policy, and governing a matter of bookkeeping”. (Gielen 2017, 138).

Creativity and aesthetics are central to a reality in which consumers and producers alike are under the domain of media outlets, entertainment industry, and big tech – a “hedonistic culture where there is no place anymore for art to provide a truly subversive experience”. (Mouffe 2013, 85). Cynicism is the common thread of the present, evident

in contemporary art as well, where critiques of neoliberalism are not conducive with the affirmation of alternative futures. Moreover, in the arts the idea of a neutral exhibition, the curatorial white cube can “be understood as a neoliberal smooth space, in which invisible curatorial hands create the impression of an egalitarian libertarianism that glosses over existing hierarchies, exclusions, and restrictions”. (Buurman 2016, 156). Neoliberal capitalism is “highly flexible and it is possible to become complicit with it even while one is aware of its detrimental effects”. (Vujanović and Cvejić 2016, 37).

Contemporary discourses on creativity contribute to neoliberalism’s hegemony through the colonisation of artistic and cultural thinking “and, as such, represent a gentrification of the imaginary”. (Harris 2014, 18). A creativity “limited to that of reproduction”. (Jeanes and De Cock 2005, 9) (Salehi 2008, 23). These discourses speak to the duality, to the contradiction of neoliberalism’s *toxic* relationship with aesthetics and creativity: loves innovation and creative thinking, but hates the risk-taking, daydreaming, and fallible nature that is inherent to artistic practices. (Harris 2014, 19). As Claire Bishop observes, “art and the aesthetic are denigrated as merely visual, superfluous, academic – less important than concrete outcomes”. (Bishop 2012, 22).

It seems fitting that we now return to utopia and to the question that opened this reflection. A “reaction to an undesirable present and an aspiration to overcome all difficulties by the imagination of possible alternatives”, (Vieira 2010, 7), is the idealism that anchored Thomas More’s island¹⁷, whom “out of the Greek words *eu-topia* (good place) and *ou-topia* (no place) created Utopia”. (Hoyer 2017, 25). A place of justice and equality, whose very existence was a demonstration of the possibility of an alternative future. However, Rachel Weiss argues that this idealism “fit(s) poorly in a moment of post-history, post-humanity, ideological implosion and radical doubt”. (Weiss 2007, 202). Vieira also observes that “looking around, it seems that utopia has been replaced by images of a very unsatisfactory present, or, in the case of utopian literature, by images of a dystopian future”. (Vieira 2010, 21).

Herewith lies the difficulty of envisioning an alternative to neoliberalism’s hegemony. Utopia could be argued to have been buried as an alternative political project in an age of political erosion and resignation. The feeling that the future could transcend the present,

¹⁷ “The word utopia first appeared in Sir Thomas More’s book *Utopia*, published in Latin in 1516 with a title that translates to *Concerning the highest state of the republic and the new island Utopia*. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2009).

that of the social imagination, has vanished. (Jacoby 2000, xi) (Gielen 2017, 138). We “cling to what exists because we can no longer imagine an alternative”. (Graeber 2012, 382). Dirk Hoyer argues it is a “crisis in lieu of collective imagination, crisis instead of utopia, the permanent crisis that does not only seem to be a defining structural characteristic of the economic system but also of its critics”. (Hoyer 2017, 29).

However, can we truly proclaim utopia’s demise? Or could it be that we are witnessing its reinvention? Lewis Mumford said that “our most important task at the present moment is to build castles in the air”, (Mumford [1922] 1962, 180), while Salman Rushdie affirmed that “we are not helpless; that to dream is to have power (...) unreality is the only weapon with which reality can be smashed, so that it may subsequently be reconstructed”. (Rushdie 1992, 122). Others have proposed a renewed approach of utopia, one of radical imagination, recognising that reality, the world, requires and is capable of change: “radical imagination is not just about dreaming about different futures. It’s about bringing those possible futures back to work on the present, to inspire action and new forms of solidarity today”. (Haiven and Khasnabish 2014, 3).

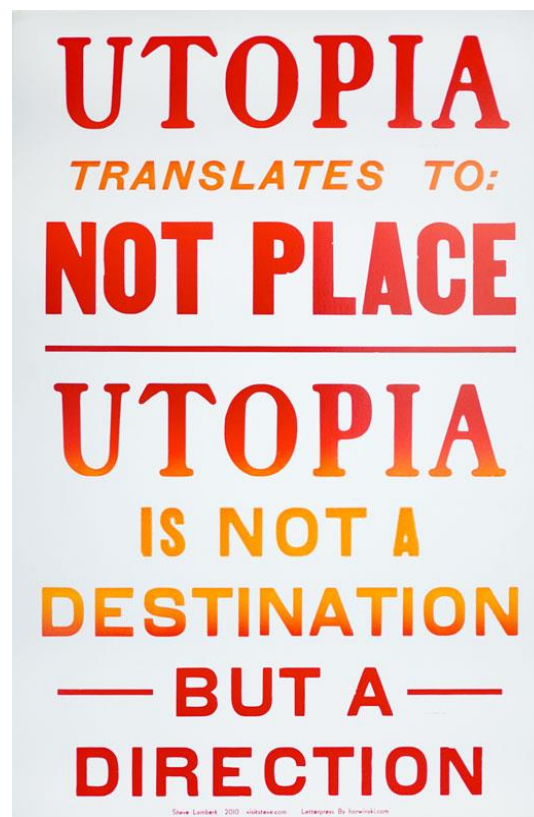


Figure 3 – Steve Lambert, 2010.

It may then be argued that utopia has reinvented itself as Fátima Vieira suggest, by becoming a process that takes part in the everyday construction of society, without giving up its critical perspective. Its essence has not change, what has is its materialisation, its way of being – “the idea of a blueprint has been replaced by the idea of vaguer guidelines, indicating a direction for man to follow, but never a point to be reached”. (Vieira 2010, 22).

Utopia translates to: not place; Utopia is not a destination but a direction perfectly embodies utopia’s reinvention. To imagine different realities is to construct a strategy for questioning the world. “Taking mainly the shape of a process, refusing the label of an *impossible dream*, utopia is a programme for change and for a gradual betterment of the present”. (Vieira 2010, 23).

As Robert Tally Jr. argues, “perhaps it seems overly optimistic or even naïve, but the idea of imagination as a revolutionary force retains value in a world in which real alternatives to the status quo are taken to be, not just impossible, but unimaginable”. (Tally 2010, 3).

3.1.2. Disincorporation: politics, culture, and aesthetics

“We got to
Pump the stuff to make ya tough, from the heart
It's a start, a work of art
To revolutionise, make a change, nothin's strange
People, people! We are the same”
(Public Enemy 1989)

“Man is a political animal because he is a literary animal who lets himself be diverted from his *natural* purpose by the power of words”.
(Rancière [2000] 2004, 35)

I have argued that neoliberalism is the hegemony of the present. I also have presented a substantiated context that aims at painting a picture of today’s neoliberal social order and the apparent lack of an alternative to it. As such, I believe now it is important to reflect on how hegemonies rise and in their relationship with art and culture. My focus will be

in theories that reflect on our current neoliberal capitalist hegemony mainly through the lenses of Western tradition critical theory, political science, and philosophy.

Jacques Rancière comes close to hegemony in his definition of *police* or *police order*, “an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and that sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it (...) sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise”. (Rancière 2010, 29). He views radically differently from Walter Benjamin’s *aestheticisation of politics*¹⁸ the inextricable relation between aesthetics and politics, defining aesthetics as the “delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience”. (Rancière [2000] 2004, 8). Politics is for him a form of action that disturbs this arrangement, therefore described as “an extremely determined activity antagonistic to policing: whatever breaks with the tangible configuration whereby parties and parts or lack of them are defined by a presupposition that, by definition, has no place in that configuration”. (Rancière 2010, 29). Antagonistic is also *the political*, which Chantal Mouffe defines as a “dimension inherent to all human societies”. (Mouffe 2013, 2).

Antagonism, an idea seemingly contrary to democracy’s dictionary, is the cornerstone of Chantal Mouffe’s agonistic model of democracy, which argues that hegemonies or social orders are a momentary and delicate articulation of continued hegemonic practices, through which the *common sense* is constructed rather than being a manifestation of an essentialist objectivity preceding these practices. It also means that every social order is “susceptible to being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices that attempt to disarticulate it in an effort to install another form of hegemony”. (Mouffe 2013, 2).

This agonistic view of politics recognises passion as the leading force within a plurality of political identities that are impossible to conciliate. It proposes a shift from antagonism to agonism, from enemy to adversary, each seeking its hegemony while acknowledging the other’s legitimacy within the democratic principles. “The agonistic struggle is the very condition of a vibrant democracy”. (Mouffe 2013, 7). The point is to have a conflictual consensus that provides citizens with multiple forms of democratic political

¹⁸ “Walter Benjamin’s famous distinction between the *aestheticisation of politics* and the *politicisation of aesthetics* collapses as meaningless: There has never been any *aestheticisation* of politics in the modern age because politics is aesthetic in principle”. (Bishop 2006).

identification, while simultaneously avoiding the political apathy of emphasising consensus. In opposition to the liberal adversarial view – a competition among elites which does not question the prevalent hegemony, the agonistic adversarial view assumes that democratic politics aim to “*sublimate* those passions by mobilizing them towards democratic designs, by creating collective forms of identification around democratic objectives.” (Mouffe 2013, 9).

A conception similar to Chantal Mouffe’s *hegemony as the articulation of continued hegemonic practices* can be found in the works of various theorists that have developed their research in post-colonialism following Edward Said’s *Orientalism*. Nelson Maldonado-Torres proposes the notion of coloniality, a concept that differs from colonialism, whose inception is historically and geographically situated in the discovery and conquest of the Americas. Coloniality “refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production”. (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 243). Thus, the coloniality developed in the Americas became the basis, the *sine qua non* condition for the emergence of the capitalist imperial hegemony. Other Latin American researchers have worked in notions that build on the latter as a hegemonic model of power in Quijano’s coloniality of power (Quijano 2000); on the ontology of coloniality and on its encounters in Maldonado-Torres’ coloniality of being (Maldonado-Torres 2007); in Dussel’s and Quijano’s Eurocentrism as the knowledge model that “became globally hegemonic since the seventeenth century”. (Escobar 2007, 185) (Dussel 2000) (Quijano 2000); and on the processes of subalternity effected by the coloniality of power in Mignolo’s global coloniality (Mignolo 2000). The latter goes so far as to propose a different hegemony, one defined by border thinking:

“Border thinking points towards a different kind of hegemony, a multiple one. As a universal project, diversity allows us to imagine alternatives to universalism (...), as the *rest* becomes the sites where border thinking emerges in its diversity, where *mundialización* creates new local histories remaking and readapting Western global designs (...) the break away from the idea of totality and brings about the idea of networks”.
(Mignolo 2000, 310).

African theorists and thinkers have also developed research on Eurocentric hegemony and have proposed a shift from a centrality based in imperial, colonial, and capitalist forms of thinking and practice, towards an Afrocentricity that proposes that Africans

ought to be the agents of their own perspective. Furthermore, it is not a notion that substitutes Eurocentrism, only insofar that it disrupts the latter's globalising hold, it is according to Asante, "non-hegemonic, it is not a philosophy that blindly claims African superiority over other cultures (...) it is possible that many perspectives cohabit, live side by side". (Houessou-Adin 1995, 188) (Bakerie 1994).

According to Gramsci the creation of a new culture and new *common sense*, a cultural front, is essential for the "overcoming of subalternity". (Crehan 2016, 55). Artistic and cultural practices, as hegemonic practices, can thus be said to play a "decisive role in the articulation of a given hegemony". (Mouffe 2013, 89). As Azoulay argues our relationship with the historical, cultural, and artistic archival is one that can either reproduce imperial forms of thinking or one that recognises that what was *archived*, "political species were and continue to be real options in our present". (Wallace 2020). Politics and art compose *fictions*, "material rearrangements of signs and images, relationships between what is seen and what is said, between what is done and what can be done", (Rancière [2000] 2004, 35), through political statements and *literary locutions* that have a real effect on reality. They shape and mould the trajectories through which groups of people "adhere to a condition, react to situations, and recognize their images". (Rancière [2000] 2004, 35). Jacques Rancière argues that:

"However, these locutions take hold of bodies and divert them from their end or purpose insofar as they are not bodies in the sense of organisms, but quasi-bodies, blocks of speech (...) Therefore, they do not produce collective bodies. Instead, they introduce lines of fracture and disincorporation into imaginary collective bodies. (...) They form, in this way, uncertain communities that contribute to the formation of enunciative collectives that call into question the distribution of roles, territories, and languages. In short, they contribute to the formation of political subjects that challenge the given distribution of the sensible".

(Rancière [2000] 2004, 35-36).

In Western Europe and North America in the age of modernity¹⁹ politics and culture constructed fictions through the symbiotic relationship between the emergence of the concept of heritage and the establishment of the *infant* nation states. Heritage was the manifestation of a collective narrative, a physical representation of the national identity.

¹⁹ I am referring to what can be describe as the technological, economic, cultural, and socio-political context that emerged from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution of 1789. "There is little consensus as to when modernity began. Histories of Western Europe suggest that a modern era arrived at the end of colonial invasion and global expansion, which date to the 18th and early 19th centuries". (Snyder 2016).

(Smith 2006, 18) (Cortez 2020, 22). A form of *governmentality*, “how the state indirectly and at a distance induces and solicits appropriate attitudes and forms of conduct from its citizens”. (Hall 1999, 4). This notion involved the creation of epistemes, of disciplines to canonise these forms of thinking and behaviour – *history and archaeology*, as well as “institutions of power and knowledge production”, (Mkhonza 2021, 32), for these to be continually re-enacted – the *museums*. Such spaces played a key role in articulating a hegemony both capitalist and imperial. Ariella Azoulay’s work identifies an imperialism that “tries to destroy what came before, and voraciously seeks out the new by sealing the past away in dusty archival boxes and the glass vitrines of museums”, (Verso Books n.d.), and which “subject to colonial and imperial designs (...) universalises European thought as scientific truths, while subalternising and invisibilising other epistemes”. (C. Walsh 2007, 224) (Mkhonza 2021). Museums, art galleries, historians, and archaeologists were fundamental in the creation of knowledge systems that hierarchise the understanding of humanity: a Eurocentric colonial view. According to Maldonado-Torres, “the whole world was practically seen in the light of this logic”. (2007, 243) (Mkhonza 2021).

Simultaneously, politics and art could be argued to be entering a new paradigm, that of the aesthetic regime. By overcoming the system of representation, where the grandeur of the subject informed the dignity of the genre of representation, this new regime disrupted, first through literature²⁰, the link between subject matter and form of representation. “The aesthetic revolution is first of all the honour acquired by the commonplace, which is pictorial and literary before being photographic or cinematic (...) it shifts the focus from great names and events to the life of the anonymous.”. (Rancière [2000] 2004, 28).

This relationship between politics, culture, and art, ushered a new paradigm that would in the second half of the 20th century play a decisive role in late capitalism’s emerging hegemony: *the democratisation of culture*²¹. Democracy as the greater number and culture as the “the common treasure of community”, (Rancière 2021), in which the democratisation of the latter proposed to make culture “accessible to as many people as possible; to bring cultural heritage closer to the public and to encourage the creation of

²⁰ This revolution began with the literature of Balzac, Hugo, and Flaubert. “All of these forms of cancellation or reversal of the opposition between high and low not only antedate the powers of mechanical reproduction, they made it possible for this reproduction to be more than mechanical reproduction”. (Rancière [2000] 2004, 29).

²¹ This paradigm is usually associated with the creation of the French Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959 and the action of André Malraux, who inspired and gave rise to a first wave of cultural policies in many other countries. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021).

works of art to enrich it”. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 5). This view reflects a cultural hierarchy that places erudite culture and its dissemination above mass and popular culture. A paradoxical perspective that devalues artistic practices and citizenship: “how can the same individuals compose at the same time the sovereign people and the *non-public* excluded from partaking in the pleasures of art and the spectacle?”. (Rancière 2021) (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 5). The emergence of this paradigm coincides with the universalisation of modernity through the heritage boom²² and its internationalisation through diplomatic institutions such as the UNESCO’s 1972 World Heritage Convention. (Cortez 2020, 27). All cultures and places histories became subaltern to the Eurocentric modernity which, as Arturo Escobar argues, is “no longer purely an affair of the West, (...) all world cultures and societies are reduced to being a manifestation of European history and culture”. (Escobar 2007, 183).

In the last twenty years, however, there has been a gradual change from *democratisation of culture* to *cultural democracy*²³. This new paradigm recognises that culture does not need to be brought to places for it is already there in the shape of a multitude of cultural expressions, while simultaneously seeking to complement it with other cultural and artistic practices. According to the Porto Santo Charter, *cultural democracy* represents a new form of relationship between institutions and communities, transforming consumers into cultural agents, while preserving cultural diversity and protecting cultural rights. Most notably it “recognises the right for emancipation and empowerment of people as active cultural subjects who participate in and decide the cultural life of their communities” (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 6).

Notwithstanding the progression from democratisation to democracy, it is important to take note of the critiques of its multicultural and identity-based nature. The promotion of cultural diversity is “identified with the recognition of a multitude of identities (...) where artistic practice is presented as self-expression and cultural democracy as the coexistence of these multiple expressions”. (Rancière 2021). A conception which recognises cultural diversity but that, nonetheless, departs from a “proprietary and identity-based conception of culture (...) where each everyone is put in his place with his identity and called to behave in accordance with this identity”. (Rancière 2021). A focalised perspective of

²² A term used to refer to the exponential growth in cultural or heritage tourism starting from the 1970’s.

²³ “*Cultural democracy* is a cultural model which, having its roots in the 1960s, gained preponderance in the 1980s. It advocates for the creation of conditions for a more active cultural participation, and the recognition of the cultural practices of different social groups”. Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 6).

progressively concise communities which fails to acknowledge the totality by which “alienation is intensified”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 142). A form of multiculturalism, or as Zizek labels it, the form of neoliberal ideology:

“an attitude which, from a kind of empty global position, treats each local culture the way the colonizer treats colonized people (...) it *respects* the Other’s identity, conceiving the Other as a self-enclosed *authentic* community towards which he, the multiculturalist, maintains a distance rendered possible by his privileged universal position”.
(Zizek 1997, 44).

Participatory artistic practices, defined by their social engagement and ethical focus, in what has been termed the *social turn*, a “recent surge of artistic interest in collectivity, collaboration, and direct engagement with *real* people”, (Bishop 2006, 1), can be said have been “recuperated and neutralized by the forces of corporate capitalism”, (Mouffe 2013, 85), or in other words, appropriated by a political thinking that perversely equates artistic practices to social inclusion. Claire Bishop notes this in New Labour’s²⁴ rhetoric which shares socially engaged art’s aversion for cultural production for its own sake and that was developed around a *social inclusion* agenda according to which “arts compensate for social exclusion through socially inclusive strategies” while “structural inequalities of society remain uninterrogated”. (Bishop 2006, 3).

While acknowledging participatory art’s importance as a project that (re)humanises a reality oppressed by the hegemonic practices of neoliberalism, it can be argued that the urgency of “this social task has led to a situation in which socially collaborative practices are all perceived to be equally important artistic gestures of resistance” (Bishop 2012, 13). In opposition to the 1960’s and 70’s avant-garde’s search for elusive experiences over objects but without ever renouncing visuality, today’s socially engaged practices are mainly concerned with processes over aesthetics and are almost exclusively dependent on in-person long duration experience (Bishop 2012, 5). They have also come to be defined by a focus on ethics, in what Peter Dews coined as the *ethical turn*²⁵, whereby

²⁴ A name that defines United Kingdom’s Labour Party during the 90’s up to the 2010’s and the tenure of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown as prime ministers. “The understanding that the party would have to rethink the market (not only in economic but in social terms), embracing it in a way foreign to many of the unions and the traditional Labour left, grew increasingly after 1992, until, after the Labour victory of 1997, there was a clearly marked path for New Labour. (...) The new path of the party was to be a middle one, in the phraseology of New Labour, a “third way,” supposedly embracing both social justice and the market”. (“The Tony Blair Government [1997-2007]” n.d.).

²⁵ “Questions of conscience and obligation, of recognition and respect, of justice and law, which not so long ago would have been dismissed as the residue of an outdated humanism, have returned to occupy, if not

controversial or disruptive artistic processes and outcomes are muted in favour of a “consensual behaviour upon whose irreproachable sensitivity we can all rationally agree”. (Bishop 2012, 26). As Rancière defends, “the ethical turn is not a simple appeasement of the various types of dissensus between politics and art in a consensual order. It appears rather to be the ultimate form of the will to absolutize this dissensus”.(Rancière 2009, 201).

So if it can be argued that participatory, socially engaged and ethically infused artistic practices have been, at least partly, appropriated as hegemonic practices within neoliberal social order, then what kind of art still plays a critical role in society? Maybe an art whose main objective is the “production of new subjectivities and the elaboration of new worlds”. (Mouffe 2013, 87).

It must, however, be argued that critical artistic practices cannot work as forms that are expected to lead to an *aha moment*, to “lift of a supposedly false consciousness so as to reveal the *true reality*”, (Mouffe 2013, 93), to solely providing “an *awareness* of the state of the world”, (Rancière [2000] 2004, 59), or to invite us to “see the signs of capital behind everyday objects”. (Bishop 2012, 29). It is not enough to formulate paternalistic, denunciative or transgressive “didactic political messages, in visual form or representing political activism as a type of visual art. Both cease pretty quickly to be interesting as art, while leaving the political world largely unchanged”. (Noble 2009) (Mouffe 2013, 95). Therefore, the dream of an ideal political work of art aims at:

“disrupting the relationship between the visible, the sayable, and the thinkable without having to use the terms of a message as a vehicle (...) and would ensure, at one and the same time, the production of a double effect: the readability of a political signification and a sensible or perceptual shock caused, conversely, by the uncanny, by that which resists signification. In fact, this ideal effect is always the object of a negotiation between opposites, between the readability of the message that threatens to destroy the sensible form of art and the radical uncanniness that threatens to destroy all political meaning”.
(Rancière [2000] 2004, 59).

A duality without which there is no criticality, since as Rancière notes, “the arts only ever lend to projects of domination or emancipation what they are able to lend to them, that is to say, quite simply, what they have in common with them: bodily positions and

centre stage, then something pretty close to it”. (Dews 2002, 33). This trend as faced opposition most notably from the philosophers Alain Badiou, Jacques Rancière, and Slavoj Žižek. (Bishop 2012, 25).

movements, functions of speech, the parcelling out of the visible and the invisible”. (Rancière [2000] 2004, 14)

As such, every work of critical art must reflect this duality, “to insert itself into a social network which will either appropriate or reject it, and to celebrate, once again, the Universe of art as such, precisely because it is always in danger of collapsing”. (Guattari 1995, 106). Artistic practices can “hack the virtual world of our society rather than *leaving it alone* in its actuality”, (Vujanović and Cvejić 2016, 4), acting akin to the Lacanian Real²⁶ which speaks to the rupturing of the symbolic order, to the disruption of our symbolic forms and practices of representation, (Lacan 1979), allowing us “to break down our conventional, habit-dulled certainties about what the world is and has to be”. (Rushdie 1992, 122). As Paul Klee said, “art does not reproduce the visible but makes visible”, (Klee 1961, 76), its true power is precisely in “making visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate, in giving a voice to all those who are silenced within the framework of the existing hegemony”. (Mouffe 2013, 93).

However, in order for counter-hegemonic artistic practices to produce alternative identities it is necessary to go beyond processes of de-identification, as Stavrakis claims, “a critique of an ideological system of meaning cannot be effective if it remains at a purely deconstructive level”. (Stavrakakis 2007, 81) (Mouffe 2013, 93). Rancière argues that “the channels for political subjectivation are not those of imaginary identification but those of *literary* disincorporation”, (Rancière [2000] 2004, 36), which can be interpreted as that political subjectivities are not constructed through an imaginary essentialist conscience which is unveiled by a work of art. But rather through the disruption, the disincorporation, the affection of *literary*²⁷ artistic practices which appropriate the commonplace, making the ordinary beautiful in the face of the *true*: “the ordinary becomes a trace of the true if it is torn from its obviousness in order to become a hieroglyph, a mythological or phantasmagoric figure”. (Rancière [2000] 2004, 30). Chantal Mouffe nears this idea that “if artistic practices can play a decisive role in the

²⁶ “The theory of the three registers of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real forms the skeletal framework for the various concepts and phases of most of Lacan’s intellectual itinerary. (...) as that which is foreign to Imaginary-Symbolic reality—this reality is the realm containing conscious apprehension, communicable significance, and the like—the Real is intrinsically elusive”. (Johnston 2018).

²⁷ Literary as in the aesthetic logic of visibility that is “pictorial and literary before being photographic or cinematic”, (Rancière [2000] 2004, 29), – an appropriation of the commonplace, that “finds symptoms of an epoch, a society, or a civilization in the minute details of ordinary life”, (Ibid), through which mechanical reproduction (photography and film) became art. (Ibid).

construction of new forms of subjectivity, it is because, in using resources which induce emotional responses, they are able to reach human beings at the affective level”. (Mouffe 2013, 96). As does Clair Bishop, when she notes that it is the “attention to the affective capabilities of art that avoids the pitfalls of a didactic critical position in favour of rupture and ambiguity”. (Bishop 2012, 29).

Lastly, and following this reflection on the emergence of hegemonies and the emancipatory potential of counter-hegemonic artistic practices in neoliberalism’s disarticulation, I suggest we follow Rancière in rethinking the current paradigm of cultural democracy in favour of what he calls the *aesthetic democracy*.

Aesthetics has somewhat of a bad reputation, since it has in the last decades been, through academy’s focus on social history and identity politics, equated with oppression, exclusion, the market, and the elitist cultural hierarchy. Yet, aesthetics refers simply to what is related to experience of the sensible. (Rancière 2021) (Bishop 2012, 17) (Harris 2014, 114).

In opposition to cultural democracy’s focus on cultural diversity and in the recognition of a multitude of identities, aesthetic democracy offers a different perspective, one in which the objective is not “expressing oneself but rather, on the contrary, to get out of oneself and to become-other.” (Rancière 2021). It is a sense of humanity, nourished by the passions of fiction, which goes beyond citizenship, which is grounded in the idea that equality is not a goal to be achieved, rather it is a starting point. It sees democracy not only as an assembly where all are free to express themselves, but as a place where one is capable of assuming the other’s voice and sensitivity. As Alfred Jaar recounts on his empathy and identification with African countries, “people do not expect an artist born in Chile to be concerned by what happens in any other country. I find it shockingly normal. This is what makes me human. (...) (on a Fela Kuti concert) the last concert I attended, he told us in the audience: *You Africans, listen to me as Africans. And you, non-Africans, listen to me with an open mind!*”. (Jaar 2020).

This paradigm is sustained by the view that culture is not be possessed, but “the idea of a capacity for play shared by all and everyone”. (Rancière 2021) The ability to create, share and feel is everywhere, in the multitude of people who like to play with their hands, voice, body or instrument. “It is from this effective reality that we must start in order to extend

its scope and amplify its strength. This is the task of aesthetic democracy”. (Rancière 2021).

Rancière enunciates three arenas where aesthetic democracy must fight, the first being the combat against identity and hatred passions, common today throughout Europe. A conflict that as to not only with the friction between local population and incoming immigrant communities, but also with the growing powerlessness of people in face of today’s economy and politics. However, as he notes, art has escaped this reality, not because of its progressive nature, rather because “music, theatre, dance, and performance art have made us particularly accustomed to these encounters and crossovers by which artists explore the common capacity for expression in different arts and traditions”. (Rancière 2021).

Secondly, he views formatting as a key opposition force, which looks to guarantee the entertainment industry’s returns by targeting audiences with a specific artistic product, demonstrating that inequality can inhabit diversity. “It separates competences to deny the existence of a competence shared by all. It puts everyone in their place by giving them what is adapted to their desires and tastes, which it thus predetermines” (Ibid). Real democracy “must encourage all deforming practices that allow the encounter of all sensible experiments”. (Rancière 2021).

Third and last, the process of dematerialisation, correlation of the progress of digitalisation and so pervasive in the aftermath of covid-19 pandemic, has been seen by some as the ideal vehicle to at last bring culture to all. They have, nonetheless, “forgotten that such facilitated communication was paid for by a loss of sensory experience”. (Rancière 2021). In artistic practices this means a deficit of *living art* – the irreplaceable sensitive in the encounter of an artist and the gaze of a spectator, as well as the deprivation of the *role of forms* – a practice of encounter between ways of expression, genres, and traditions. We must not fail to acknowledge the “distance that isolated individuals experience in relation to their own sensitive capacity, their capacity to be affected by the encounter, affected by the other”. (Rancière 2021).

Rematerialisation is thus the essential objective around which Rancière claims aesthetic democracy should organised around. He views four ways to contribute to this task: first, to give opportunity to as many people as possible to access artistic practice and creation; then, to promote the meeting and experiencing between diverse artistic practices and their

community; thirdly, to privilege the material encounter to the greatest number of people with performing arts; lastly, to develop the ability to express and share the sensitive effect of such an encounter. (Rancière 2021).

“To develop practices of encounter, to oppose the logic of formatting, to place the aesthetic materiality at the centre of our experience, these are three objectives for the development of an aesthetic democracy and for the fight against the powers that oppose it”. (Rancière 2021).

3.1.3. A pedagogy of (re)humanisation

“To discourse on humanism and to negate people is a lie.”
(Freire [1970] 2000, 92)

I don't remember when exactly I read my first comic book, but I do remember exactly how liberated and subversive I felt as a result. Everything about the enticing book of coloured pictures, but specially its untidy, sprawling format, the colourful riotous extravagance of its pictures, the unrestrained passage between what the characters thought and said, the exotic creatures and adventures reported and depicted: all this made up for a hugely wonderful thrill, entirely unlike anything I had hitherto known or experienced.
(Said 2001)

I finished the last section with a reflection on how artistic practices can still play a critical role in society and with the introduction of a new cultural paradigm, that of the aesthetic democracy. Following that I would like to explore what could constitute, in today's neoliberal social order, a counter-hegemonic (re)humanising pedagogy, and how can art and culture relate to said critical, even revolutionary, pedagogy.

I think a good way to begin this section is by borrowing from Dennis Atkinson's *pedagogic dilemma*. He describes this, a contemporary issue in much of the western world, as “the compulsion to educate students into traditions of knowledge and skills, with a view to personal and national advancement. In this pedagogical atmosphere curriculum content is rigorously structured and assessment of learning (and teaching) is

a predominant and revered feature”. (Atkinson 2011, 73). It speaks to today’s regimented, test-driven school, and outcome-focused school environment where “there is no longer room for the free and trusting collaboration required for both real learning and creativity”. (Harris 2014, 61) (Ibid, 18) (Rogoff 2014, 4).

This system could be defined, as Paulo Freire argued, as *banking education*, in which teachers and students are evaluated according to the ability to *fill the receptacle* and *to be filled*, respectively: “education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 72). Freire also points out that this system, by dulling students’ creativity and by numbing their sense of critical questioning, serves the interest of the *oppressors*, “who care neither to have the world revealed nor to see it transformed”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 73).

Humanisation has been at the centre of humankind’s question, argues Paulo Freire. He believed that it is the only human vocation, one which “is constantly negated, yet it is affirmed by that very negation. It is thwarted by injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence of the *oppressors*; it is affirmed by the yearning of the *oppressed* for freedom and justice, and by their struggle to recover their lost humanity”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 44). It is from these observations that he constructed his *pedagogy of the oppressed*. This is a pedagogy which must be “constructed with, not for, the *oppressed* in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity. And in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 48). He argues that this is an instrument for their critical realisation that *oppressed* as much as *oppressors* are the materialisation of dehumanisation.

In opposition to austerity, this pedagogy nourishes different values: “generosity, solidarity, and (...) a faith in the plenitude of revolutionary love and collaboration”. (De Lissovoy 2015, 25). It is a concept that invites every pedagogue who departs from inequality in an attempt to reduce it and who in doing so is condemned to always walk ahead of his student to consider that equality is not an end, but a beginning. “Whoever wants to work according to the egalitarian presupposition must begin not from what people cannot but from what they can. They must begin by discovering that there are a multitude of things they can do”. (Rancière 2021). A pedagogy that can be said to be

*against the state*²⁸, an anti-pedagogy, an “ethics of the unknown of becoming rather than established forms of being (...) an act of real learning involving a leap into a new ontological space”. (Atkinson 2011, 13).

“Oppression is domesticating”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 51). To emerge from and to confront it one must do it through “praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 51). For this, the once oppressors, the now humanists, must relinquish their prejudices, they must, like Joseph Beuys, seek “those possibilities which are inside every one of us”, (Beuys cited in Glozer 1990), for “trusting the people is the indispensable precondition for revolutionary change”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 60).

“The man or woman who proclaims devotion to the cause of liberation yet is unable to enter into communion with the people, whom he or she continues to regard as totally ignorant, is grievously self-deceived”.
(Freire [1970] 2000, 61).

Liberation cannot be achieved with the instruments of domestication, but only through a pedagogy of (re)humanisation that recognises that to be human is to act through “action and reflection: it is *praxis*; it is transformation of the world. And as *praxis*, it requires theory to illuminate it. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 125). For if excluded from creativity, imagination, and questioning – from praxis, individuals are never fully humanised. (Freire [1970] 2000, 72) (Beuys and Böll 1973). This is what Rancière observes from analysing 1830’s French workers and their desire for poetry, “they wanted to appropriate the use of words, the ways of looking at the world and the emotions that were forbidden to them by the very place they occupied in society”. (Rancière 2021).

Thus, the pedagogic process of (re)humanisation of individuals can be argued to operate within what Dennis Atkinson calls the concept of *that which is not yet*. This notion refers to processes of being and becoming and revolves around questions of existence and recognition: “forms of being that have no existence, which is to say, to being that does not count or is not yet valued. This might refer to emerging states of becoming but also to those forms of being that are often present but absent, (...) they have no existence, no recognition (...)”. (Atkinson 2011, 13).

²⁸ Here state is used ambivalently by Dennis Atkinson, referring to both “local states of practice and political/ideological states of regulation”. (Atkinson 2011, 1).

Such pedagogy recognises that real learning is a question of humanity, that requires a move towards a new ontological space, a *space of potential*, which promotes encounters that produce new forms of becoming and that question the position of learners within the *police order*²⁹: those whose existence is not acknowledged in the educational context, those whose way of relating to the world (through plasticity, body, voice, or sound) are unrecognised, and those whose perceived lack of *cultural capital*³⁰ exclude them from the pedagogical space. (Atkinson 2011, 14). As Maldonado-Torres argues, a decolonial turn, “making visible the invisible and about analysing the mechanisms that produce such invisibility or distorted visibility”. (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 262). This requires a move beyond established knowledge and assimilated practices towards a place of encounter that replaces the “educational goal of deposit-making (...) with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world”, (Freire [1970] 2000, 79), which, by rupturing the established ways of being, may “lead to new, perhaps more emancipated subjectivities”. (Atkinson 2011,15).

The fracturing of the existing ways of being, that of the *oppressors* and of the *oppressed*, requires the discovery of subjectivation, that subjects are constructed, as Foucault argued, in *power/knowledge*, through specific forms of knowledge, practices, and discourses. (Atkinson 2011, 23) (Rogoff 2014, 5). Thus, power is not only what we oppose but is also “what we depend on for our existence and what we harbour and preserve in the beings that we are”. (Butler 1997, 1). Bourdieu shares a similar view in his notion of *habitus*³¹, claiming that perception, thinking and ways of evaluation, both self and others, “are the product of history and, at the same time, the source of practices and perceptions which reproduce that history”. (Bourdieu 1992, 13). As does Freire when claiming that the *oppressed’s* perception of themselves and structure of thought has been shaped in the reality of oppression, that “their ideal is to be men, but for them, to be men is to be *oppressors*. This is their model of humanity”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 46).

²⁹ Police order in Jacques Rancière’s conception (for the definition see 3.1.2., 35).

³⁰ These refer to practices and forms of knowledge that are viewed as superior in a given field. Bourdieu claims that “The laws or regulative devices which organise its functioning involve power relations between those who occupy dominant positions in the field and those who are dominated. Such relations are invoked through the acquisition of cultural capital”. (Bourdieu 1993, 162).

³¹ This notion, according to Bourdieu’s Language and Symbolic Power, “orients actions and inclinations without strictly determining them. It gives them a *feel for the game*, a sense of what is appropriate in the circumstances and what is not, a *practical sense*. (...) is not so much a state of mind as a state of the body, a state of being. It is because the body has become a repository of ingrained dispositions that certain actions, certain ways of behaving and responding, seem altogether natural. The body is the site of incorporated history”. (Bourdieu 1992, 13).

In Badiou's view, however, a path towards (re)humanisation can be argued to be found. He considers that the process of becoming relates to a truth procedure, a truth which ruptures knowledge, through which a subject by being truthful to the radical consequences of the event³², "denotes a process of subjectivation which in other terms can be viewed as a *commitment to*", (Badiou 2005, 525), or in other words, by which the subject feels "compelled to invent a new way of being and acting in the situation". (Badiou 2001, 42).

To "bore a hole in knowledge", (Badiou 2005, 525), that commits subjects to new ways of being requires an education that nourishes risk, failure, and the unexpected, that pursues unpredictable learning paths, that combines the known and the imagined, that embraces conviviality, collaboration, transgression and creativity "(...) and which keep(s) stretching the terrain of knowledge so that it is always just beyond the border of what can be conceptualised." (Rogoff 2014, 4) (Atkinson 2011, 6) (Ibid, 19) (Harris 2014, 20) (Jacob and Zeller 2015, 149).

As Anne Harris puts it, "if education can remake itself (...) it must slow down, dig deep, and return to an experiential relationship with learning", (2014, 66), embracing daydreaming and stimulating imagination, thus moving beyond knowledge production towards spaces of thinking. For whereas knowledge is linked to structured practices and its production connected to neoliberalism's dematerialised commodification and to business, thinking implies "networks of indiscipline, lines of flight and utopian questionings". (Sheikh 2002, 7) (Sousa 2011, 69). An education that looks to create *moments of insight* which produce an "ability to notice new connections". (Lehrer, 2012, 42).

This education should embody the ontology of play. Play as a "form of meta-communication (...) that allows for new cultural possibilities to continuously be explored". (Henricks 2010: 162). Play as free practice that has no closed outcome, which has no other end than itself and that allows for the exploration of potential social and political alternatives: "a social process of *critical inquiry* focused on creativity and dialogue rather than mastery". (Rorabaugh, Morris, and Jesse 2013) (Caillois, 2006, 125) (Rancière 2021) (Ølgaard 2015, 133).

³² Dennis Atkinson describes Badiou's notion of event as that which "involves an encounter; something has to happen which fractures our current ontological state." (Atkinson 2011, 29).

As Rancière argues:

“this aptitude to play (...) is a form of enrichment of the capacity to act and to feel. (...) This capacity, present in everyone, in the most diverse forms, carries the promise of another humanity, a humanity to come for which equality will not be an abstract law of the State but a material reality manifested in the very use that each one can make of his senses”.
(Rancière 2021).

And if teachers and educators are to remake, to (re)humanise themselves and their students they must *let things happen*. (Atkinson 2011, 6). The promotion of critical thinking, the stimulation of “true reflection and action upon reality”, (Freire [1970] 2000, 84), of liberating praxis, “imbued with a profound trust in people and in their creative power”, (Freire [1970] 2000, 73), are urgent tasks in their quest for mutual (re)humanisation.

It is through the act of (re)humanisation that artistic practices relate to what I have been presenting as a critical, and even revolutionary, pedagogy. Felix Guattari argues that “art should claim a key position of transversality (...) bringing about mutant forms of subjectivity and rehumanising disciplinary institutions (...) art is an endlessly renewable source of vitalist energy and creation, a constant force of mutation and subversion”. (Guattari 1995, 106). In the same vein, Joseph Beuys’ ART=CAPITAL formula proposes that “the real capital of human societies consists in the creativity of their members and the capital they contribute and produce together as social organisms”. (Zumdick 2015, 149).

The force of critical artistic practices is manifested in their disruption of the *distribution of the sensible*, of the dominant consensus, by “giving a voice to all those who are silenced within the framework of the existing hegemony”, (Mouffe 2013, 93), by *disobeying* and refusing predetermined forms of thought, practice, and behaviour, and by opposing the established aesthetic educational criteria. (Atkinson 2018, 60) (Ibid, 158) (Deleuze 1994, 139).

“The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation or a reinvention of the subject itself”. (Guattari 1995, 131). A work of art, an object of encounter, forces us to think of new forms of thinking, seeing, acting, and feeling. Out of these “phases of transformation and rupture”, (Ziarek 2004, 33), an emancipatory

aesthetic pedagogy produces a reconstruction of subjectivities through which a new “subjectivation and world emerge”. (Atkinson 2018, 60) (Atkinson 2011, 89).

This aesthetic pedagogy, following Rancière’s aesthetic democracy, need not be created, for it exists “a little bit everywhere in the multiplicity of those who learn, practice, and share in the forms of art”. (Rancière 2021). The artist as teacher or as educator, speaks to the artistic ability to present an imagined reality, where Pascal Gielen argues “their extra educational potency lies”, (2017, 139), as well as to what Dennis Atkinson described as a subtraction of existing practices of art education, “towards a reconfiguring which precipitates a new potential space for an artistic-pedagogical configuration where new subject points or vectors emerge”. (Atkinson 2011,122). Beuys takes this idea even further through his famous statement that everybody is an artist, arguing that when creativity and imagination fuel the transformation of society it produces a social sculpture. (Zumdick 2015).

It bears mentioning, nonetheless, that this pedagogic practices must address both the art and the social field, for if they fail in their *double finality*, they “risk becoming *edutainment* or *pedagogical aesthetics*”. (Bishop 2012, 274).

The world of art, especially contemporary art, has open itself to these pedagogic practices, so much that they have “become the sites of some of the most important redefinitions of knowledge that circulate today”, (Gielen 2017, 138). Nowadays these spaces look to pedagogic practices not as sporadic, but as their *raison d’etre*. Fracturing and reconfiguring the positions between educators and learners by refusing their established subjectivity creates relationships where moments of imagination, inertia, dialogue, and reflexivity “can serve both the purposes of reframing and producing subjects in the world”. (Rogoff 2014, 9) (Rogoff 2008, 2) (Atkinson 2011, 65).

These places, as they become simultaneously places of learning and of performance, emphasise an “aesthetic experience based on the materiality of practices and emotions”. (Rancière 2021). The museum, the cultural institution, the university, the gallery, the artist run space, is now the “site of *possibility*, the site of *potentiality*”, (Rogoff 2008, 4), where the possibility of action is not defined by ability, but rather by desire; and which always carries the potential of failure.

It must, however, be noted that these artistic practices should not fall prey to what Chantal Mouffe describes as the exodus approach: the denial of counter-hegemonic struggle in

institutional spaces. Thus failing to recognise that schools, universities, *conservative* cultural institutions, and other institutional spaces are also key subversive arenas for a (re)humanising counter-hegemonic pedagogy that acknowledges “the multiplicity of avenues that are open for political engagement”. (Mouffe 2013, 94) (Ibid, 100) (De Lissovoy 2015, 94).

A counter-hegemonic (re)humanising pedagogy, a critical and even revolutionary pedagogy, a pedagogy against the state, an aesthetic pedagogy must be, as Rancière argued:

“based (...) on actual material practices: the practices of spectacle or exhibition production, the practices of actors, musicians, dancers, plastic artists but also, the practices of listening and seeing, and the practices of translating sensations and emotions. It is from the materiality of these practices that the real aesthetic communities are created”.
(Rancière 2021).

3.1.4. The desire for democracy: to be more

Lastly, following the reflection of what a counter-hegemonic (re)humanising pedagogy could look like today, I wanted to approach citizenship education as a conceptual space of struggle, where counter-hegemonic artistic practices may lead to emancipatory processes of being and becoming, from individual to citizen, from hegemonic reproduction to political agency, and ultimately, to the *desire for democracy*.

We live in a time of an alleged *crisis* of democracy to which citizenship education might be but a partial response and a cosmetic solution for deeper problems. This narrative, perpetually linked to the idea of crisis in our schools, fails to recognise the shrinking of free space and time in educational spaces, making it difficult for schools and universities to organise democracy and civil space. (Biesta 2011, 6) (Gielen 2017, 137) (Harris 2014, 59).

Citizenship education is flawed from the start by perceiving individual young people as subjects which “lack the proper knowledge and skills, the right values, and the correct dispositions”, (Biesta 2011, 12), or in other words, the *good citizenship!* It views citizenship as an outcome, in which individuals acquire the *good citizenship* and achieve

the status of citizens through the transversion of an educational trajectory. This immediately raises not only the issue that no learning outcome is guaranteed in any educational context, but that the consequence of this logic ends up placing young people in the “problematic position of not-yet-being-a-citizen”. (Biesta 2011,13-14).

Ultimately its most perverse construction is that this formulaic achievement of citizen status is predicated in a specifically engendered citizenship, the *good citizenship*. Which looks to eliminate dissent, to uphold neoliberalism’s *police order*, so that to become citizen one must adhere to the practices and forms of thought of the existing hegemony: “to be included and participate in society means to conform to full employment, have a disposable income, and (...) to be self-administering, fully functioning consumers who do not rely on the welfare state and who can cope with a deregulated, privatised world”. (Bishop 2012, 14) (Biesta 2011, 14).

This view of citizenship is also a correlation of the political liberal thought, defined as much as for the idea of individualism and personal responsibility, as for the dismissal of collective political action. Transferring politics and citizenship from collective reality to personal phenomenon, while simultaneously reproducing the existing hegemony by emphasising consensus, reduces democratic struggle to a *competition among elites*, leading “to apathy and to a disaffection with political participation”. (Mouffe 2013, 7). (Ibid, 4) (Ibid, 9) (Biesta 2011, 31) (Ibid, 44).

The voiding of the civil space and the withering of political agency is also visible in the privatisation of democratic lifelong learning. An essential component of not only individual and collective emancipation, but also of the health of democracy. Instead, today’s neoliberal hegemony views lifelong learning as something that one pursues individually simply because of its economic value, “they cannot see why collective resources should be made available for the funding of what in their view are strictly private issue”. (Biesta 2011, 69) (Ibid, 63). Additionally, as Paulo Freire observed, it is not in the interest of the *oppressors*, “who care neither to have the world revealed nor to see it transformed”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 73).

An emancipatory conception of citizenship education should, in line with a (re)humanising pedagogy, a pedagogy against the state, “advocate a spirit of critique towards the wider political context”. (Atkinson 2011, 15). The critical questioning of learners’ actual conditions, especially the young people targeted by this education, should

be nourished and encouraged “even if it leads them to the conclusion that their own citizenship is limited and restricted”. (Biesta 2011, 16). Furthermore, this spirit of critique can only be fully exercised within “those moments when things are not compulsory, but perhaps also strictly speaking not allowed (when the) civil space may occur”. (Gielen 2017, 137). It is there, in the space left open by a governing body, that real democratic behaviour and social responsibility can take place.

In the face of diminishing time and space for democracy in institutional educational spaces, artistic counter-hegemonic practices can be said to be drawing civil praxis to the art world. Cultural institutions and artistic spaces have shifted from *ivory towers* to places of dialogue where, “based on questioning, on agitating the edges of paradigms and on raising external points of view”, (Rogoff 2008, 8), they might just be “among the few remaining places of refuge for lessons in democracy”. (Gielen 2017, 138). Artistic practices allow for the experimentation of the praxis of democracy, praxis that is “action and reflection (...) (the) transformation of the world”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 125). Precisely because, as PNA’s manifest advocates, art develops within the indissociable unity between content and form it can explore the emotional and sensorial relationship between democratic discourse and civil space, and in doing so it goes beyond traditional democracy learning, it “co-defines the conditions of a civil process”. (Gielen 2017, 138). As Beuys observed, “to develop creativity, therefore, also means to develop the democratic processes and forms that enable every person to develop their capacities (...)”. (Zumdieck 2015, 150).

This task, nonetheless, requires artists to take a leap, “to get out of oneself”, (Rancière 2021), out of the role assigned to them within the *police order*, and only then can they both arrive and create the civil space, “hazardous because here artists step outside their acknowledged civic role, thus risking their very status as artists”. (Gielen 2017, 139).

This is the task of rematerialisation, what Rancière argues is the one essential objective which aesthetic democracy should be organised around. (Rancière 2021). The materiality of these counter-hegemonic artistic practices opposes the “socialisation conception of civic learning”, (Biesta 2011, 86), which views citizenship education as the integration and reproduction of the existing hegemony. Rather it promotes and supports “civic learning as a subjectification conception”, (Ibid), which centres around the fostering of “political subjectivity and agency”. (Ibid).

As Gert Biesta argues:

“The desire for democracy does not operate at the level of cognition and therefore is not something that can simply be taught. The desire for democracy can, in a sense, only be fuelled. This is the reason why the most significant forms of civic learning are likely to take place through the processes and practices that make up the everyday lives (...).”
(Biesta 2011, 98).

3.2. Actions that transform the world

If in the last subchapter I looked to explore PNA’s reflection, as part of Paulo Freire’s notion of *praxis*, as the theory that illuminates the action, in this subchapter I will look to PNA’s action, in its potential towards a “transformation of the world”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 125). Following the analysis of the multiple theoretical frameworks that substantiate my proposed definition of the Plano Nacional das Artes, I am going to analyse, through those frameworks, the actions and measures inscribed in its manifesto and strategic action plan. For this, I will mainly draw from my internship experience, as well as from my interviews with commissioner Paulo Pires do Vale and deputy-commissioner Sara Brighenti.

3.2.1. Building castles in the air

“Our most important task at the present moment
is to build castles in the air”.
(Mumford [1922] 1962, 36).

“O Plano Nacional das Artes é como um pássaro que tem pousado
em cada região para deixar as suas notícias”.
(Madalena Vitorino in Plano Nacional das Artes 2020)

When I reflect on my time in PNA I cannot but think on Lewis Mumford’s quote, “our most important task at the present is to build castles in the air”. (Mumford [1922] 1962,

36). This speaks to what deputy-commissioner Sara Brighenti told me, that “as our ambition is to create structure, it means that these first years imply the transformation of behaviours and forms of thinking in that systemic, territorialised, endemic sense”. (Brighenti 2021). Paulo Pires do Vale said elsewhere that “we privilege that lengthy time, that of structures, of roots, of transforming paradigms and worldviews. The tree does not appear instantaneously – but we listen already, in the rumours of this strange times, the echo of a present explosion by many desired”. (Pires do Vale 2020b).

In that sense, when looking to analyse Plano Nacional das Artes’ actions since its inception we need to start by defining what effectively constitutes the way the Plano acts, or in other words, what is its *style*. The construction of PNA’s manifesto and strategic action plan began with the act of attentive and intently listening to those it would come to serve, meaning that the executive committee spent about three months traveling around the country meeting with teachers, students, cultural agents, and artists, in search of what they believed was necessary to bring people closer to the arts, heritage, and culture. This precisely embodies what Paulo Pires do Vale defines as PNA’s *style*, “I think there is a particular style in PNA to make things happen. It is not just content, we believe from the start that form and content are a unity, and as such, there is a style in how to deal with people, with others and with what we do”. (Pires do Vale 2021b) (Sara Brighenti 2021).

This way of approaching the task given to them, of constructing this manifesto “not from what people cannot but from what they can”, (Rancière 2021), not for but with the people, in an act of trust in people’s capacity for change, speaks to Paulo Freire’s idea of revolutionary leadership. He argues that “the correct method for a revolutionary leadership to employ in the task of liberation is, therefore, not *libertarian propaganda* (...) The correct method lies in dialogue”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 67). Likewise, Sara Brighenti considers that following the notion of *with* PNA cannot but have “a leadership that supports the implementation *with* and not for”. (Sara Brighenti 2021).

From these dialogues a question often rose: if this, if PNA, was not unreasonably ambitious. To that, Sara Brighenti responds “it is not, in the sense that we felt it was the necessary one, and therefore, we did not want nor more nor less than what seemed to us necessary”. (Sara Brighenti 2021). This *disproportioned* ambition relates to the utopic nature of the Plano Nacional das Artes. Here I am referring to the reinvented notion of utopia, which without losing its critical perspective, transformed from instructive to intentional. It became a “strategy for the questioning of reality and of the present”. (Vieira

2010, 23). Paulo Pires do Vale argues as much when he says that PNA serves, as do all utopias, as a guide for where it wants to go, but that also offers the possibility of critical perspective. He views utopia not as something in some distant future but rather already here, as “a clearing in reality”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). Furthermore, Sara Brighenti proposes that if “if the manifesto is the way, (...) then the strategy is like a road map”. (Sara Brighenti 2021).

When it comes to utopia, to alternative futures, to social imagination Cvejić and Vujanović tell us that “the obstacle to social imagination is a lack of systemic thought”. (Vujanović and Cvejić 2016, 3). As if they had heard this words the executive committee constructed PNA not as loose set of measures, but rather through a manifesto which reflects the realisation that if they want to succeed they must not speak only the schools but to the system, to the *village* as whole. This notion of system informs PNA’s actions in what can be considered a systemic approach. By which I mean not only that its manifesto presents what I have previously defined as a nationwide multifaceted actionable plan that intervenes in multiplicity of places and imaginaries. But, more importantly for what I am arguing, that much of its approach develops around the systematic affirmation of the importance of bringing people closer to the arts, heritage, and culture.

This strategy has sought to create structures rather than events, “we do not want flare and pomp, it requires a different work, more than to be noticed, we need to create structures that will endure”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). It has been predicated in the identification and construction of partnerships throughout the country with artists, cultural institutions, municipalities, schools, and private entities. This dialogue built on PNA’s manifesto, this colonisation of the civil space lexicon with ideas of transdisciplinarity, of undiscipline, of the ludic, of aesthetic sensitivity, which as Anne Harris points out “in these neoliberal times of increasingly global standardisation and efficiency, (...) can be scary”, (Harris 2014, 74), has been accomplished through PNA’s executive committee and team’s astounding number of presentations of the PNA and presence in a staggering number of conferences, meetings, talks, and interviews. (Pires do Vale 2020b) (Pires do Vale 2020d) (Pires do Vale 2021b).

In what can only be described as “the first year of the slow explosion of a seed”, (Pires do Vale 2020b), PNA’s executive committee, as well as its team to a lesser extent have,

not counting the months that preceded its official unveiling³³, publicly presented nationwide its manifesto to artists and collectives, cultural institutions, educators, teachers, curators, mediators, regional and national governing bodies, media outlets, and private foundations in over 100 sessions. To which we must add more than 30 meetings with mayors, municipalities, and school groups. (Plano Nacional das Artes 2020a) (Plano Nacional das Artes 2020b). It is worth mentioning that during this period PNA also organised several conferences and talks, namely the seminar *Cidadania Cultural: experiência brasileira de participação na constituição das políticas culturais e o impacto em diferentes setores da sociedade brasileira* with Patrícia Dornelles³⁴; the conference on Plano Nacional das Artes in the Antena 2 Festival³⁵ with Paulo Pires do Vale and other speakers; and the 2nd Cinema-Education Encounter on *Undisciplining School* with Alain Bergala³⁶, Leonardo di Costanzo³⁷, and several other notable guests³⁸. (“Novidades” n.d.).



Figure 4 – Plano Nacional das Artes’ presentation at Central Gerador, by Paulo Pires do Vale, Fernanda Fragateiro, and Aldara Bizarro (counting from the second speaker on the left). Lisbon, November 5th, 2019. © Central Gerador. Accessed on November 2nd, 2021, at: <https://www.facebook.com/centralgerador/photos/a.146606706709948/146607853376500>

³³ On June 18th, 2019.

³⁴ A Brazilian professor and cultural manager.

³⁵ Antena 2 is a radio channel part of RTP (Rádio Televisão de Portugal), the public service broadcasting organisation of Portugal.

³⁶ A French film critic, essayist, screenwriter and director which has worked in the intersection between the arts and education.

³⁷ An Italian film director and screenwriter.

³⁸ Notably Graça Fonseca, the ministry of Culture, Nuno Artur Silva, the State Secretary of Cinema and the Audio-visual, João Costa, Deputy Secretary of State and of Education, and Elsa Mendes, PNA national coordinator, among others.

As Sara Brighenti explains, this “highlights that idea that PNA is in fact in the middle, in the mediator role. It could not be at the end because it has an end in sight. If it has ten years to become institutionalised and disappear it can never become an *institutional* space, it has always to be a place that promotes the sustainability of the institution. I think that it is very much along those lines that we have been working on. Connecting people, projects, and ideas”. (Sara Brighenti 2021).

This systemic thinking is synonymous with another notion dear to PNA, that of *territorialisation*. This is reflected in the Plano’s preoccupation with extending its reach to every region of the country, especially to those areas that are often labelled the peripheries, in a pursuit of its own mission: *for all and with everyone*. (Plano Nacional das Artes’ Executive Committee 2019, 16). Again, PNA is faithful to its style, combining content and form, correlating action to idea, as the notion of *territorialisation* not only guides the teams’ composition, as Paulo argues, “as the Plano further develops and inserts itself in the territory, it needs to find these intermunicipal³⁹ coordinators that are on the ground”, (Pires do Vale 2021b), but it actually has materialised in the Porto Santo School project and in the protocol with the Azorean Regional Government. The Porto Santo School presupposes the establishment of a programme “dedicated to research and critical reflection on culture and education”. (Plano Nacional das Artes’ Executive Committee 2019, 32). However, this project through the partnership with Porta 33 and the Municipality of Porto Santo has expanded and now includes the organisation of talks on arts and culture with local entities and community, the programming of events and workshops for schools, the support in the architectonic rehabilitation of the school building⁴⁰, and most notably, the organisation of a cultural and art policies think tank in the context of Portugal’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union – that would come to be Porto Santo Charter Conference. (Plano Nacional das Artes 2020a) (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021).

³⁹ Intermunicipal would correspond to a region that combines a small number of municipalities, akin to the NUT (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) III regions which in Portugal corresponds to the Intermunicipal Communities and the Metropolitan Areas of Lisbon and Porto. As of today PNA has 12 of these coordinators scattered throughout Portugal. (Pires do Vale 2021b).

⁴⁰ The school building is of particular significance since it is a design of modernist architect Chorão Ramalho.



Figure 5 – Porto Santo Charter Poster © Change is Good/Plano Nacional das Artes

The protocol with the Azorean Government focuses on the project *De Fenais a Fenais: Cultura Matriz do Desenvolvimento Local*, a partnership with the Regional Board of Culture of Azores and the Carlos Machado Museum, which is to take place between 2020 and 2024 in the northern area of the São Miguel island. It aims to “together build a project that places the arts and heritage as motors for local development, strengthening on one hand the local processes of identification and safekeeping of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, while on the other hand, recognising the role of creativity and innovation, through arts and local crafts”. (Açoriano Oriental 2020).

This notion has also been central to the work developed in PNA’s Scientific Committee, as the body presided by Maria de Assis which integrates the existing national plans and programmes that intersect art, culture, and education, seeks to create a methodology to further advance in the territory of education. This as resulted in the identification of what could be considered flagship schools, those more dynamic that have adhered to at least four of programmes and plans in the Committee, which nonetheless must be distributed throughout the territory. The goal is to construct with these schools’ students and teachers a cultural programming and an annual event that serves as a beacon, highlighting the importance of the arts, heritage and culture in education not only to other schools, but to society at large.

PNA has undertaken other forms of systemic action that are worth mentioning, namely through consulting in several projects, via its digital presence, and by the production of the PNA Collections, once more seeking to disseminate and argue for the importance of bridging the gap between citizens and the arts, heritage, and culture. The Plano's consulting as focused on projects such as the executive production of the “All I Want. Portuguese Women Artists from 1900 to 2020⁴¹” exhibition, organised as part of the Cultural Programme of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the protocol between the ministries of Culture and of Education and the Young Portuguese Orchestra directed by Pedro Carneiro, the 50th anniversary of Almada Negreiros's death commemoration, and the Group Project *Museums in the Future* which was tasked with “identifying, conceiving, and proposing measures that contribute to the sustainability, accessibility, innovation, and relevance of the museums under the tutelage of the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage (DGPC) and the Regional Boards of Culture (DRC)”. (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros 2021).



Figure 6 – Talk: *Sem Medo* at FOLIO – International Literary Festival of Óbidos, with the presence of PNA deputy-commissioner Sara Brighenti (the second from the left). Óbidos, October 16th, 2019. © FOLIO. Accessed on November 2nd, 2021, at: <https://www.facebook.com/foliofestival/photos/a.2424063304532536/2424064391199094>.

⁴¹ This exhibition was inaugurated on the 1st of June of 2021 at the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, in Lisbon. It reunited and presented “two hundred works of art from 40 Portuguese women artists created between the start of the 20th century and our days”. (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation n.d.).

The digital presence of PNA, especially its presence in social media platforms (namely Facebook and to a lesser extent, Instagram), is defined by a strategy that is grounded in the sharing of articles and news of the arts, heritage, and culture field, as well as in the sharing of proposals of artistic practices, be it performances, shows, concerts, film screenings, exhibitions, or cultural heritage sites' visits.

The PNA Collections, a measure of the Axis B. Empowerment, proposes the creation of three editorial lines that reflect on PNA's core ideas of art, education, and culture, in partnership with the Portuguese Mint and Official Printing Office. (Manifesto, 32). It resulted in the hiring of António Carlos Cortez⁴² to collect essential texts of Portuguese authors on themes of art, culture, and education, as well as in the ordering of the translation of Alain Bergala's *The Cinema Hypothesis*, and also in the dialogue with artists and collectives for the creation of a line of artistic pedagogic resources for teachers and students. (Plano Nacional das Artes 2020a).

This strategy that I have been talking about as been defined by Paulo Pires do Vale as a *pedagogy of desire*. By which he means that “the way people adhere and participate in the Plano is dependent precisely on desire (...) the first moment of that connection is the manifestation of desire (...) that is the start of this relationship”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). However, he also stresses that in order to be desired PNA needs to be desirable, in the sense that the it must be faithful to its *style* by advocating passionately for the importance of the arts, heritage, and culture, and by upholding its anti-bureaucracy and non-imposing nature. “Moreover, this areas could not be imposed, they had to live the experience of desire, of being something very strongly connected to affection and affectivity”. (Pires do Vale 2021b).

It is precisely due to this relationship to affectivity, desire, and affection that I would argue that this systemic approach, this *pedagogy of desire* could be defined as counter-hegemonic. Its manifold of actions disrupt the current neoliberal hegemony's hold over the terrain of civil space, of the common sense, emphasising how crucial it is to intervene in multiple fields and places, “not only in the art world but also in public spaces and in various educational sites”. (Mouffe 2013, 94). Through its production of political statements (e.g. PNA's presentations) and creation of actual literary *locutions* (e.g. PNA Collections), the dissemination of PNA's lexicon, this quasi-preaching of the importance

⁴² A Portuguese author and researcher.

of the arts, heritage and culture, have a real effect in the reconfiguration of “the map of the sensible”. (Rancière [2000] 2004, 35).

Paulo Pires do Vale sees PNA as counter-hegemonic, or *counterculture*, in opposition to globalisation and to the hegemonic culture of creative industries through the valuing of traditional forms of culture. (Pires do Vale 2021b). I would push this idea further by arguing that PNA’s counter-hegemonic or critical nature does not emerge primarily from its promotion of cultural diversity, that as we have seen can be used to fuel inequality, but rather from its faithfulness to the *politics of aesthetics*: aesthetics as the distribution of the visible, the sayable, of speech, and of spaces, and politics as antagonistic to it, as disruptive of this arrangement. (Rancière 2010, 29) (Rancière [2000] 2004, 8).

It is through this commitment that PNA can be identified with the affirmation that “the aesthetic need not be sacrificed at the altar of social change, because it already contains this ameliorative premise”. (Bishop 2006). It recognises “in the gaze an activity and in the emotion itself a movement, the exercise of a capacity to receive and welcome that which is other”, (Rancière 2021), or as Claire Bishop argues, it is only the “attention to the affective capabilities of art that avoids the pitfalls of a didactic critical position in favour of rupture and ambiguity”. (Bishop 2012, 29). PNA’s systemic approach, its pedagogy of desire, I would argue can be described as a pedagogy in understanding emotions and affectivity, which is “perhaps more essential to democracy”. (Rancière 2021). As Chantal Mouffe said at the Porto Santo Charter Conference:

“Those practices should aim at fostering affects of a different nature. A counter-hegemonic politics necessitates the creation of a different regime of desires and affects, so as to bring about a collective will sustained by common affects able to challenge the existing order”.
(Mouffe 2021).

3.2.2. Play. Invent the world

“Education is
kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel”
(Aristophanes 2019)

“Ever tried. Ever failed.
No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.”
(Becket 1983)

“I transform like this, perform like this (...)”
(Lamar 2017)

Plano Nacional das Artes’ pedagogy of desire relates particularly to its intervention in schools since their work with PNA is predicated on a manifestation of desire, for that is the beginning of that connection. This pedagogy is rooted in the possibility that “the arts allow us to access feelings and emotions, (in) the development of the aesthetic experience and of the artistic sensibility (...) we are not interested in a language of imposition, but precisely in one of questioning, of reflection”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). PNA could be said to raise “the awareness that something is missing from our lives, thereby arousing in us a desire for change”. (Mouffe 2013, 96).

This relationship with schools, as I have explained before, starts by their displaying the intention, by contacting and revealing their interest in working with PNA. This intention, this desire, which must be shown by the school’s board, materialises in what as undoubtedly been PNA’s most important, effective, and impactful measure, the School Cultural Project (PCE). The PCE could be described as a form of *issues-based art education*⁴³, (Atkinson 2011, 62), that seeks to promote artistic and cultural practices in the school community as well as the creation of spaces and moments for artistic and cultural fruition, for the “direct encounter between a sensitive artist's performance and a sensitive performance by a spectator”. (Rancière 2021). As Pascal Gielen proposes, “any government that wishes to encourage civil spirit and initiative should actually break open its own schools”. (Gielen 2017, 137). In its first year Plano Nacional das Artes did exactly that. The PCE was implemented in 65 school groups in 16 districts and in the Autonomous Regions, involving 49 municipalities, and reaching more than 20 000 students and 400 teachers. (Plano Nacional das Artes 2020d).

To better understand what a PCE can be let us take a look at the Castro Daire⁴⁴ School Group project for the 2019-20 school year. This project, first grounded in a

⁴³ “Where students explore personal or social issues through art practice (...) the skills will develop around the reason for making”. (Atkinson 2011, 62).

⁴⁴ Castro Daire is a village and municipality in the district of Viseu, in northern Portugal.

contextualisation of its territory, “an eminently rural, deserts, with a decreasing and ageing population (...) (where) a lot of young people are integrated in environments (...) with sparse resources, bleak future expectations, and little to no access to culture”. (Agrupamento de Escolas de Castro Daire 2020, 4). This led the school to identify that question, the matter, that they wished for their PCE to centre around, which in this case was *cultural literacy as a motor for development*, as such they defined their mission as “in order to contribute to the fixation of future generations, by opposing depopulation and by promoting inclusion, it is essential to educate students and the local community on its cultural identity, on the valuing and safekeeping of its heritage, and on the sustainability of rurality”. (Agrupamento de Escolas de Castro Daire 2020, 6). Then, around these objectives the PCE Coordinator with the PCE Advisory Committee devised a number of cultural and artistic explorations of local heritage and identity, for example, *the field and the clay – treasures to be found* or *Serra do Montemuro – the last transhumance route*. According to Cecília Oliveira, who studied this PCE’s implementation, the students who took part in these explorations showed a unanimous enthusiasm, revealing that “the (re)discovery of their roots and traditions, as well as the artistic experimentation, motivated and brought them new languages and perspectives”. (Oliveira 2021, 66). That same enthusiasm could be said of parents and teachers alike, who praised and wished for the continuation of the project. (Oliveira 2021, 67).

A lot can be said of this PCE example. I would like to first point out that this measure equally reflects the systemic approach that I discussed in the last section, namely through the creation of a PCE Advisory Committee. This committee is supposed to bring together the multiplicity of actor in a territory, the school, the students, the parents, the municipality, the cultural institutions, the artists, the universities, and the private entities. It is “connecting people, projects, and ideas”. (Brighenti 2021). This ties with another idea, a motto, of PNA, that “the school is a cultural hub, in the same way that the cultural institutions are an educational territory. So this idea of subverting what you are expecting

from a school, (...) is to say that (...) the school (is) a fundamental cultural centre”. (Pires do Vale 2021b).

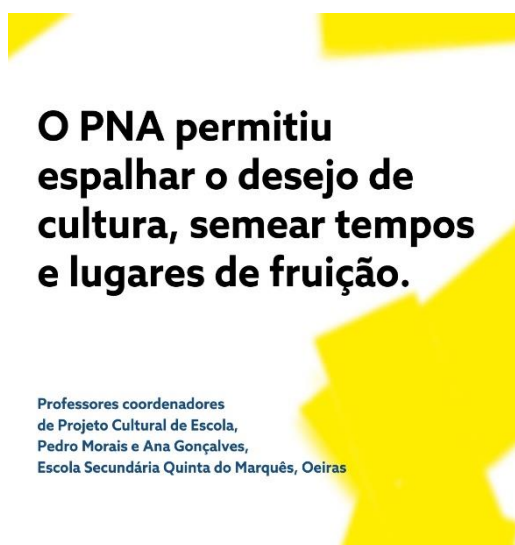


Figure 7 – Testimony of the PCE coordinators of the Quinta do Marquês Highschool, in Oeiras, for PNA's first anniversary. Accessed on November 3rd, 2021, at: <https://www.pna.gov.pt/1-ano-de-pna/>



Figure 8 - Testimony of the PCE coordinator of the André Soares School Group, in Braga, for PNA's first anniversary. Accessed on November 3rd, 2021, at: <https://www.pna.gov.pt/1-ano-de-pna/>

The pedagogy of desire, this form by which PNA acts according to its core theories, is similar if in a smaller scale to the creation and implementation of the PCE which proposes actions based on reflections, and I would argue that both could be defined as (re)humanising pedagogies. This follows Paulo Freire's conception of praxis as action and reflection, as the transformation of the world, and without which there can be no (re)humanisation, “for apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 72). Other lenses through which to look to PCE would be through Dennis Atkinson's pedagogy against the state. For this project is undoubtedly grounded in an *ethics of unknown of becoming*, operating within a space of potential – *that which is not yet* – where the position of students in the *police order* is put into question, namely those whose languages of relating to the world (through body, plasticity, voice or sound) are often neglected and those whose cultural capital is perceived to be inferior. (Atkinson 2011, 13-15). This also allows us to look at PCE as a form of art education of counter-hegemonic or political nature since its questioning of the distribution of the sensible, of the visible, of the sayable, and the thinkable, gives a voice to those that have been obscured under the current neoliberal hegemony. (Mouffe 2013, 93) (Rancière [2000] 2004, 59). Sara Brighenti subscribes this idea by saying that PNA

“could never be globalising nor hegemonic, and neither could it uphold that kind of verticality”. (Brighenti 2021).

This is a task for humanists, for those who believe in a pedagogy of (re)humanisation, for those that see in artistic practices and cultural manifestations the potential to “open new opportunities and new forms of *learning to learn*”. (“1o Ano Academia PNA” n.d.). Invoking Jacques Rancière, “more than ever, we must keep in mind the provocative phrase of a revolutionary thinker who reminds us that educators themselves must be educated”. (Rancière 2021). PNA upholds the same view for if the schools are to be cultural and artistic centres, then teachers and educators must discover themselves cultural agents – that is the structural and essential task of the PNA Academy.

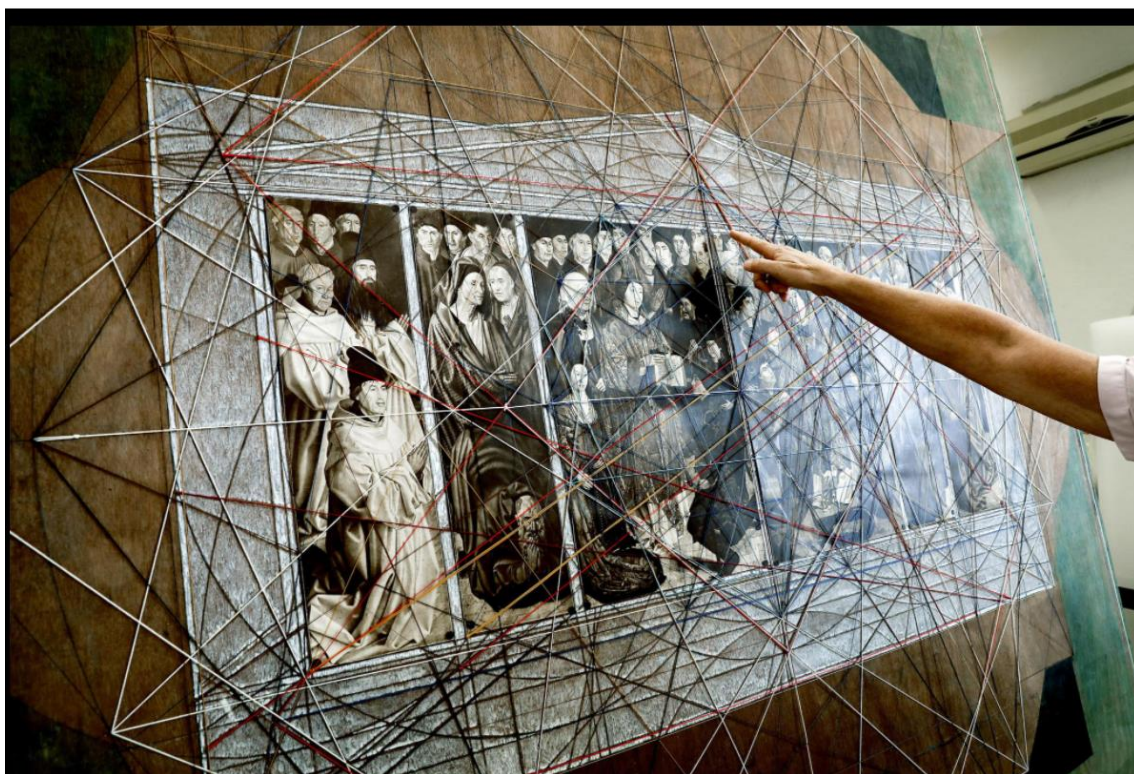


Figure 9 – Photo from the exhibition “*Almada Negreiros e os Painéis de São Vicente – um retábulo imaginado para o Mosteiro da Batalha*” commissioned to Simão Palmeirim, for the MNAA – Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga. This exhibition perfectly illustrates the intersection between artistic practices and other disciplines and shares the theme with Simão Palmeirim’s “*Art and Mathematics*” course in PNA Academy’s Portfolio. © Daniel Rocha/PÚBLICO.

The PNA Academy consists in the training of teachers, mediators, cultural creators, and other educators, aiming to harness the transdisciplinary power of the arts, heritage, and culture by inserting these in the different discipline’s curricula, in order to (re)think school beyond the discipline, unifying different knowledges. (“1o Ano Academia PNA” n.d.). This measure, launched shortly after the end of my internship, has been implemented through online and in-person training courses and actions that mainly take place in

certified training centres throughout the territory. The courses taught are compiled in the PNA Academy Portfolio, which offers a wide range of proposals that provide new forms and methodologies of approaching monodisciplinary subjects through the disruptive, transdisciplinary, and undisciplining lenses of artistic practices and cultural manifestations.

In opposition to a hegemony in which teachers are construct and construct themselves as subjects through discourses and practices of assessment, the PNA Academy advocates what can be described as a double pedagogy, to educate the educators. Through the act of encounter that artistic practices produce, it seeks to create “moments of insight” (Lehrer, 2012, p. 64, in Harris, 21) and to (re)think forms of thinking, of discourse, and of practice. (Atkinson3, 23). As Paulo Freire suggests, “true humanists (...) cannot use banking educational methods in the pursuit of liberation, for they would only negate that very pursuit”. (Freire [1970] 2000, 78). Rather, teachers and educators must let things happen, must allow for open-ended exploration and problem posing. They must embrace the empty space, that one that is purposefully and fundamentally empty in PNA’s logo, which represents the centre, the empty space, which emerges from the relationship between the gaze of spectator and the work of art: a place where something new can occur, where we can enter. (Pires do Vale 2020a).

This requires that they embrace the ludic, the game, the playfulness, and the arts, that is, “culture as part of that ludic universe”, (Pires do Vale 2021b), the idea of a capacity to play with one’s hands, voice, or an instrument that is everywhere and is shared by everyone. Regarding arts, heritage, and culture not as tools for but as something understood as a pleasure in of itself, a materiality through which one freely constructs oneself. Play as the “exploration of new social and political possibilities”, (Rorabaugh, Morris, and Jesse 2013), a critical questioning that reflects the ambiguity of the arts, their multiple interpretations. (Pires do Vale 2021b). (Pires do Vale 2020a) (Rancière 2021). As Paulo Freire notes, in this way:

“the problem-posing educator constantly re-forms his reflections in the reflection of the students. The students – no longer docile listeners – are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher (...) The role of the problem-posing educator is to create; together with the students (...)”
(Freire [1970] 2000, 80).

This is only possible if teachers and educators oppose the disbelief in people and their capacities. If they come from a place of trust in both the power immanent to artistic practice and in people and their capacity for creativity, it means, as Paulo Pires do Vale affirms, trusting in “their capacity for change”. (Pires do Vale 2021b) (Rancière 2021) (Freire [1970] 2000, 73). These notions of cultural egalitarianism and agency relate to the adoption of the lexicon of another concept dear to the construction of PNA, and one that I have approached before, that of cultural democracy.

Paulo Pires do Vale argues that assuming this paradigm is to abandon hierarchised notions of culture that depreciate certain cultural manifestations in favour of others, considered elitist. A *symbolic violence* that devalues citizens and that makes them feel on the *outside*. (Pires do Vale 2021b). This is an argument that opposes the aesthetic sensitive high culture of art galleries to a popular culture in which *the people* is only emancipated if directly involved in the production of the work of art. In fact, it seems, as Clair Bishop points out, that such argument works under the perverse assumption that:

“the middle classes have leisure to think, while the marginalised can only engage physically; this argument reinstates the class prejudice where working class activity is restricted to manual labour. (...) where the aesthetic is found to be the preserve of the élite, while the *real people* prefer the popular, the realist, the hands-on”.
(Bishop 2006).

Well, I believe we can affirm that PNA utterly and radically opposes this assumption. In that sense, I offer the words of Paulo Pires do Vale on ending that *symbolic violence* by constructing the PCE so that each one is dependent on its own territory and community, rather than on a distant governing body that orders projects that ignore each territory’s unique cultural identity. “There is a monitoring, but mainly there is an active listening and a passing of responsibility to the territory”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). This form of action, this *style*, goes back to PNA’s motto of for all with everyone, which, as Sara Brighenti argues, “implies a diversity that means that there cannot be a vertical leadership, but a leadership that supports the implementation *with* and not *for*”. (SB Interview). In that sense I also propose that we look to the Porto Santo Charter, of which PNA was the organiser and most determined advocate. On cultural democracy it reads like this, “it values what each one knows, their traditions, their voice (...) it values local culture and complements it with other cultural expressions, opening up local experience to the universal, and stimulating this dialogue”. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 6). I

would like to highlight this part, *complements it with other cultural expressions, opening up local experience to the universal*. This is a statement that quite precisely defines PNA's actions because if there is something that I experienced during my internship, through the daily contact with the executive committee and the team was that the respect for cultural diversity was just as important as the quality and criticality of the cultural and artistic practices proposed for each PCE.

As such, I would argue that by never relinquishing *aesthetics*, in the sense of “what as to do with the experience of the sensible”, (Rancière 2021); *form and formalism*, regarded as “a practice of encounter between ways of expression, genres, and traditions”, (Rancière 2021); and *visuality*, as in “however de-skilled or de-subjectivised (...) art prompt(ed) a wide range of affective responses”, (Bishop 2012, 6), Plano Nacional das Artes moves beyond cultural democracy towards what Jacques Rancière defined as *aesthetic democracy* and its *aesthetic education*:

“Such aesthetic education need not be created. She exists already, a little bit everywhere in the multiplicity of those who learn, practice, and share in the forms of art, (...) but it must be allowed to develop its emancipatory potential. This requires institutions to promote (...) encounters between multiple artistic practices”.
(Rancière 2021).

To my point I believe it can be argued that *encounters between multiple artistic practices* precisely defines another of PNA's notable measures towards the educational context, the Artist in Residence Project (PAR). This project revolves around the idea of an artistic residency, but one that takes place within the walls of the school and in its territory, with students, teachers, parents, and community. For the 2019-20 school year 20 artists, 3 artists collective, and 2 cultural associations were expected to take up residence under PNA's 65 school groups. However, in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic a significant number of residences were either postponed or cancelled altogether, with a few of these, about 15% were able to still work remotely. In 2020 the Artists in Residence developed projects with the school community and produced artistic pedagogic digital resources, games, online tutorials, and audio-visual registers.⁴⁵

These works produced during time of distancing speak exactly to what the artists can bring to the school, their creativity and critical point of view, their collaborative breaking

⁴⁵ Per information given by PNA's team.

down walls form of work, their aesthetic sensitivity and their capacity to express the emotions of that experience. They can display art's "endlessly renewable source of vitalist energy and creation, a constant force of mutation and subversion (...) (towards) rehumanising disciplinary institutions". (Guattari 1995, 103). Paulo Pires do Vale trusts in the artistic process and in artistic for the transformation of reality, especially the reality of education. He believes that presence of artists in schools could be very important in transforming the way schools act – "arts are undisciplined and transdisciplinary". (Pires do Vale 2021c). Others have referred to artists as educators as having a heightened pedagogic potential due to their ability to imagine alternative worlds or has creating new pedagogical spaces from which new subjectivities can emerge. (Gielen 2017, 139) (Atkinson 2011, 122). I think it is best to let the artists speak for themselves:

"The experience as Artist in Residence was one of the liveliest and stimulating projects in which I was involved in the past few years. I wish that the commitment and curiosity with which I lived this challenge leaves some seeds in the schools, for inside me I take a blossoming garden. (Cláudia Varejão, Filmmaker, PAR in the schools of Rabo de Peixe and Maia, São Miguel, Azores)".
(Cláudia Varejão cited in Pires do Vale 2021a).

"As the Artist in Residence in School Group of Lousã (AEL) I had the possibility of experiencing this relationship (between artistic creation and the human dimension) in a particularly special form. (Hélder Bruno Martins, Musician, PAR in the School Group of Lousã)".
(Hélder Martins cited in Pires do Vale 2021a).

Jacques Rancière from the point of view of the aesthetic education claims that it would be important to foster schools as simultaneously places of learning and of performance "in order to amplify an aesthetic experience based on the materiality of practices and emotions". (Rancière 2021). It is the plasticity, the palpability of these artistic practices that constitutes real aesthetic communities where recipients – students, teachers, parents, whomever, can get out of themselves and assume other roles, becoming artists, organisers, or curators. Lastly, I would allude to his thoughts that "aesthetic action must be aware of the limits of its power in order to produce smaller but more real effects than large-scale programmes", (Rancière 2021), which fortunately is on par with PNA's executive committee's ideas, "for now these evidence that might seem not that visible, I believe are within the expectations of our ambition". (Brighenti 2021).

3.2.3. For a citizenship of enjoyment and emotions

In this last section of chapter 3 I propose to analyse how PNA's manifesto, this pedagogy of desire, and its strategic action plan relate to the desire for democracy and to citizenship emancipation. To this point, Paulo Pires do Vale stresses PNA's intention to empower teachers, school administrations and institutions' board, to think the cultural commitment in a democratic way. (Lusa 2021). On issues and themes of citizenship, he also argues that their connection to PNA was only natural because "artists have over the course of time worked them (...) (they are) the very wealth of the artistic experience in all ages". (Pires do Vale 2021b).

PNA's manifesto presents several measures that intersect with issues or with the very conception of citizenship, however, the most direct one are the Citizenship Do It teaching resources. This measure proposes that artists create digital pedagogical resources that reflect on matters of citizenship – race, gender, climate, democracy, political system, etc., through the lenses of the arts, heritage, and culture. Unfortunately, and even though various artists and collectives were approached for this task, the advent of the covid-19 pandemic and the consequential situation of lockdowns and social distancing meant that PNA's team (myself included) had to adapt and accelerate its implementation. As such, PNA launched in its website a platform that hosts a curated mosaic of over 200 pedagogical digital resources that instead of ordered from artists were harvested by its team all over the web, with the intention of not allowing the pandemic and its consequences to isolate students, families, and citizens from the arts, heritage, and culture. However, I would argue that PNA views this situation similarly to Jacques Rancière. The latter considers digitalisation one of the greatest challenges to the development aesthetic democracy, but I believe that both share on the take that "dematerialised communication is an instrument at the service of the aesthetic materiality and not ever its substitute". (Rancière 2021).

Nova página de Recursos educativos PNA A cultura é indisciplinar!

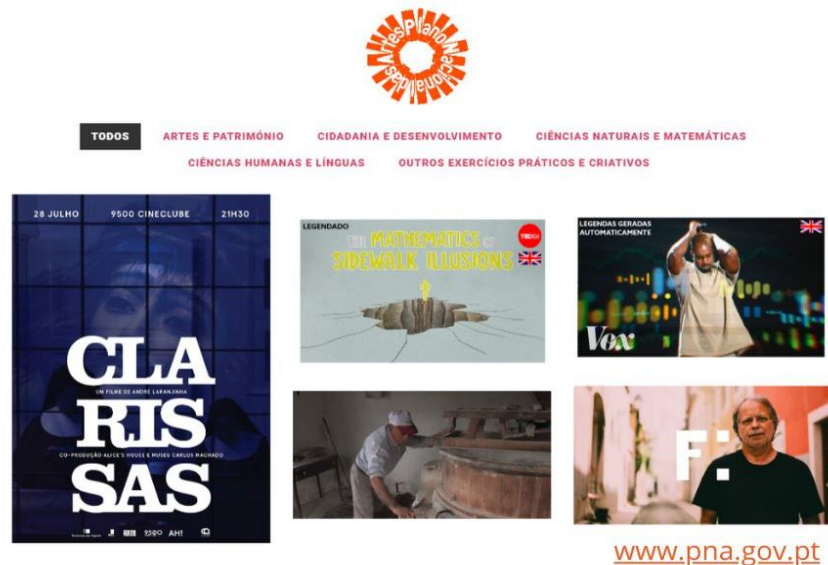


Figure 10 – Image announcing the new pedagogical resources' platform in PNA's website. Accessed on November 4th, 2021, at: <https://www.facebook.com/PlanoNacionalArtes/photos/a.542872426117437/739933519744659/>

As I mentioned above, other measures in PNA's manifesto speak to democracy or citizenship. For example, the PCE very directly involves the creation of a democratic body, the PCE Advisory Committee, or the Artist in Residence which does not involve democratic procedures but that breaks down curricular walls and creates spaces of transversal dialogue. However, I would like to look at these measures, the ones I have mentioned and a few others, the Cultural ID and the PEM.CE, in their relationship not to democratic procedures per se, but to their becoming of tools for citizenship emancipation.

First, I think that these measures, as a matter of fact all of PNA's manifesto, is grounded on a core democratic value, that of equality. By defining it as starting point, PNA disrupts the notion of cultural capital, under which only those who acquire said capital “possess the means for advancement within the field and beyond”, (Bourdieu 1993, 162), and disregards the politics of the function of commodities, by which a “set of issues concerning authenticity and expertise plagues the modern West, (...) around the issues of good taste, expert knowledge, *originality*, and social distinction, and that is especially visible in the domain of art and art objects”. (Appadurai 1986, 45). Instead, PNA advocates that everyone has the capacity to partake in aesthetic creation and emotion.

Paulo Pires do Vale as said that what concerns the Plano is that “we never fail to remember that the arts are a motor of critical and creative thinking. In that sense, we are not interested in a language of imposition, but precisely in one of questioning, of reflection”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). The acknowledgment of the arts potential in producing critical points of view is particularly relevant in the context of democracy and citizenship. For if “the desire for democracy does not operate at the level of cognition”, (Biesta, 98), then it must be fuelled through practice and materiality. As such, artists can claim a leading role in producing lessons in citizenship because artistic practices are predicated in the indivisible unit of form and content: form is already content, just as medium is already message, and in this way a democratic desire can be constantly constructed. (Gielen 2017, 138) (Pires do Vale 2020c).

Therefore, the arts can be said to have an emancipatory power. This, however, should not pertain to a conception that equates the spectator to passivity and the performer to activity and that from the latter deduces the power of art in promoting active citizenship. Such conception shares similarities with the previously mentioned binary view of high and low culture. In opposition to it, PNA through the Porto Santo Charter assumes that “the relationship between the people and cultural creation, fruition and preservation does not need to be *participatory* (...), to be meaningful. To simply enjoy culture is one of the determining aspects of cultural participation”. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 7). It could be said that “there is a need to acknowledge in the gaze an activity and in the emotion itself a movement (...) an education of emotions”. (Rancière 2021).

It would seem that despite a dispute over what term should precede democracy both the Porto Santo Charter and Jacques Rancière argue that the arts and culture allow us to go beyond, to get out of oneself, and in a manifestation of democracy, to identify ourselves in others, to take their voice and espouse their sensitivity. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 7) (Rancière 2021).

To conclude the analysis of PNA’s actions in light of the theories that illuminate them, I would argue that the measures referred in this subchapter and to a considerable degree the Plano Nacional das Artes’ manifesto and strategic action plan as a whole (there are measures that would not presuppose a radical move beyond the paradigm of cultural democracy) are fulfilling the three objectives around which the aesthetic democracy should be implemented: to develop practices of encounter, to oppose the logic of formatting, and to place the aesthetic materiality at the centre of our experience.

4. THE GAP AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

“When we visit schools, when we receive messages from cultural institutions, of artists that have been working as resident Artist in Residence (PAR), for example, we can appreciate that there is already a lot of positive achievements”.
(Pires do Vale 2021b).

I titled this chapter *the gap and what the future holds* because in it I look to explore the evolution of PNA between the end of my internship and the submission of this report – from April 2020 to November 2021, as well as the successes and shortcomings of the PNA so far, and what future challenges it may face.

First and in the spirit of transparency, I should explain that following the end of my internship I continued to work in PNA as a full-member of the team for the duration of my 10-month contract, until February 2021. This allowed me to have a more profound insight on PNA’s action and progress, albeit it made the writing of this report, in particular since some time has passed, a bit *blurrier* in terms of chronology, project evolution, and my personal responsibilities. Having said that let us look to how the most notable measures of PNA progressed in this last year and a half, to which I will from now on refer to as *the gap*.

A fairly clear sign of PNA’s establishment in the collective imaginary of Portugal’s cultural and educational context is the deceleration of the rhythm of presentations. Instead, during the gap PNA progressively shifted its focus from multiplying itself in presentations around the country, to the participation and more importantly to the organisation of conferences and events. PNA has since organised over a dozen of initiatives, the most notable of these the *Porto Santo Charter Conference*⁴⁶ that “gathered 450 participants from 37 countries around the world”, (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021), and which resulted in the production of a “guiding map of principles and

⁴⁶ The Conference “From Democratization to Cultural Democracy: Rethinking Institutions and Practices” was a hybrid event, physical and digital, held in the April 27th and 28th, 2021, in Porto Santo Island, in Madeira. It “mobilised the collaboration of major European cultural networks and non-governmental organisations”. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021).

recommendations for applying and developing a working paradigm for cultural democracy in Europe”. (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021, 2). I would also like to highlight another event under the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the *EU University & Culture Summit: Fostering the Union through Culture and the Arts*⁴⁷, which followed the *National Encounter University and Culture*⁴⁸ in reflecting on the relationship between cultural and artistic practice and fruition and the university. These conferences focused in discussing the role of the arts, heritage, and culture in Higher Education, namely in how they could be integrated not only in the curricula but as part of the students assessment. António de Sousa Pereira, president of the Portuguese Universities Council of Rectors, said that “culture cannot be estranged from higher education under penalty of compromising not only the intellectual and civic growth of university students, but also their actual technical-scientific preparation”. (*Observador* 2020). Lastly, I would mention the *1st Encounter of Artists in Residence*⁴⁹ which focused on celebrating the different projects, sharing experiences, and projecting new approaches for the undisciplining of the school.

PNA’s digital presence during the gap did not suffer radical alterations but its strategy started to regularly include the sharing of practices works resulting from the PCE and PAR projects. Additionally PNA created a newsletter to continue to disseminate its actions. I would mention that PNA created an online campaign during the pandemic named *this is the time, this is the hour* advocating for the essential role that the arts, heritage, and culture as well as artists, mediators, and others play in education, called *This is the day, this is the hour* (in the original - *Este é o Dia, esta é a Hora*).

Another area that as seen further development during the gap has been PNA’s Consulting, that in this period has extended from the initiatives mentioned in 3.2.1 to new projects with the University of Porto, the Soares dos Reis National Museum, and to the Commemorations of the Hundredth Birthday of José Saramago. (“Novidade” n.d.).

Nonetheless, during the gap the measure that oversaw the most dramatic growth was undoubtedly the PCE. “To start with sixty-five school groups, and in the next year during a pandemic to raise the number to 146, and this year to surpass the 230 and going for

⁴⁷ Held online on March 29th and 30th, 2021, but based in Porto.

⁴⁸ Held online on December 4th, 2020.

⁴⁹ Held online on July 13th, 2021.

almost 250 schools⁵⁰, to have even in these pandemic years such a regular growth and reach all of these schools, about 28% of all schools nationwide, leave us very happy”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). It is worth mentioning that since its inception PNA has never worked in a school year that was not turned upside down by the covid-19 pandemic. Yet, the regular growth of most of the PNA measures, particularly the PCE, is remarkable.

The Artist in Residence (PAR) saw a hard decline in the school year of 2020-2021. However, we can attest to its recovery and growth from 2019-2020 with the projected hiring of 30 artists and collective for the school year of 2021-202 to take up residence in PNA’s schools.⁵¹

The PNA Academy has also show great growth, reaching in this last year and a half over 2000 teachers and educators, with the nationwide certified training centres playing a crucial role. (Pires do Vale 2021b).

As a direct result of this evolution, specifically in what concerns schools, PNA’s team also had an impressive growth, adding allocated teachers, the local activators that are scattered throughout the territory – in Minho, Porto, Viseu, Coimbra, Tomar, Leiria, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve and the Autonomous Regions of Azores and Madeira. Additionally, Clara Camacho also joined the team from DGPC and is responsible for working closely with cultural institutions in measures like the Cultural ID and the CISOC. “If we started with an initial core of five people, right now, we are twenty-one. In three years that is a big growth that makes us very happy and feeling that the future will be even better”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). It must be said, nonetheless, that the team might have lost some diversity with the departures of Vassilia van der Heyden, António Cardoso Pinto, and myself, in the sense that now it is very heavily composed of teachers.

Finally, the last measure I would like to point out is the PEM.CE, one which had not yet been given the conditions and the time to grow but that has started to be *adopted* (if not in an official way) by several municipalities. It now is “the municipalities themselves that want to organize in a more strategic way to link schools and cultural institutions, and to work with us in that way”. (Pires do Vale 2021b).

When evaluating or reflecting in what PNA has been most and least successful at since its public unveiling on June 18th, 2019, Paulo Pires do Vale claims that “we being

⁵⁰ Actually PNA has reached for the school year of 2021-2022, 251 schools, per data provided by its team.

⁵¹ Data provided by PNA’s team.

ambitious we have our goals set very high, the bar is very high. We understand clearly of the much that it is still to be done, but also of what has been accomplished”. (Pires do Vale 2021b). Both he and Sara Brighenti acknowledge this by pointing to the “trust that the ministries of culture and education have in the measures that PNA is implementing”. (Brighenti 2021). This relationship with the Ministries of Culture and of Education has been furthered by a second Resolution of Council of Ministers that better equips PNA in administrative terms by changing it from DGArtes to GEPAC and which establishes the legal requirements for the “necessity of its expansion to the area of higher education” (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros 2021). Additional integration of PNA in projects of both ministries, such as its articulation with the soon to be created Portuguese Network of Contemporary Art or the integration of the Artist in Residence (PAR) as one of the measures of the recent Plan for the Promotion of School Success. (Pires do Vale 2021b), shows how PNA might view this continued trust and confidence as a sign of success. As I have quoted elsewhere, Sara Brighenti considers that “for now these evidence that might seem not that visible, I believe are within the expectations of our ambition”. (Brighenti Interview).



Figure 11 – Poster for the 2nd anniversary of PNA © Changes is Good/Plano Nacional das Artes.

Amidst what remarkable growth of several measures of PNA, there are also shortcomings. Some of them are of an uncontrollable nature like a pandemic, others not so much. And on those, Paulo Pires do Vale identifies what he considers to be PNA's biggest shortcoming: the difficulty in navigating the public administrative bureaucratic apparatus. As a short staffed on administrative competences structure that is dependant of other public services and that upholds a style of (quasi)anti-bureaucracy and non-imposition, PNA has to learn to deal with the *machine's* slowness and specific language so that its most affected procedure, that of public hiring, does not compromise the urgency of its mission. However, he is also adamant in claiming that the team is learning and that as obstacles rise they must overcome them, a task for which the ministries are essential, as the previously mentioned second resolution shows, as PNA's team is now expected be reinforced in this administrative and financial area. (Pires do Vale 2021b).

Lastly, I would just put forward a few remarks on PNA's future challenges. These seem to be coming not from the realm of ideas rather than from that of actionability. What I mean is that PNA's strong roots, its manifesto and strategic action plan, are constructed in a way that makes it difficult to negate them but it is still very possible that its actions can be severely undermined. Let us look at the moment which the country is going through. As I am writing these words we already know that there will be a Legislative Election on January 30th, 2022, one that might lead to a change of government. It is important to recognise that PNA as a still-to-be-real-measure was inscribed in 2018's State Budget, that it came to fruition in 2019, and that has continued to operate (albeit with the occasional budgetary constraint) until 2021, all under what is essentially the same government⁵². As I have highlighted when tracing the origin of PNA, the successive plans and programmes that found no continuity following a change of government suggest that this is a critical factor in their successful implementation. As such, PNA might be soon come to face its most challenging period.

⁵² I used the word essentially to acknowledge that the Legislative Elections of 2019 obviously ended a government and started another, however, I was trying to convey that the government *sameness* is because it is headed by the same prime-minister and enough of the same ministers since 2015. For example, the Minister of Culture took office in 2018 and the Minister of Education and the Deputy Secretary of State and of Education took office in 2015.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

“Culture does not exist to decorate life, but rather for its transformation – so that men can build and built themselves in conscience, in truth, in liberty, and in justice. If men are capable of creating revolution it is only because they are capable of creating culture.”
(Breyner 1975b, 1153).

“(…) irreplaceable role of living art which is the place of a direct encounter between a sensitive artist's performance and a sensitive performance by a spectator.”
(Rancière 2021)

I started this report with the assumption that there was a case to be made that Plano Nacional das Artes could be defined as a *utopian aesthetic-democratic mission structure of counter-hegemonic nature that seeks to produce new subjectivities through critical pedagogy and citizenship practice*. Upon the conclusion of this report not only do I believe that this is the case, but I also believe that as I had stated this is a reasonable definition of PNA, and that much like its subject is both transdisciplinary and undisciplining.

First, I would like to briefly address the apparent contradiction of embracing both the notions of transdisciplinary and of indiscipline. I have used these notions to simultaneously define PNA because on one hand it is transdisciplinary for it draws from multiple fields of knowledge to produce its own unique conceptual synthetises, while on the other hand it is undisciplining for it is in its nature to break through the borders, to reach the needs of everybody to participate, to share, in the element of creativity. To further explain this I will refer to Sarat Maharaj who argues that “art is a form of inquiry, of being in the world, of knowing the world and coming up with new ways of knowing that world (...) art knowledge is both at once with and at odds with other forms of knowledge production (...) (it) fall(s) outside of the *either/or* binary and should be understood as an *in-between a neither/nor*”. (Sarat Maharaj cited in Vesters 2018).

Drawing from Ariella Azoulay's work *Imagine Going on Strike: Museum Workers and Historians* (Azoulay 2019), I would like to conclude this report with a series of proposals of the imaginary, finishing this journey with almost a *manifesto* of my own conclusions on what Plano Nacional das Artes is and can be.

Imagine an alternative to our reality, utopic surely, yet not in a derogatory naïve it-is-too-ambitious way nor in the form of a political project to be dismissed in a cynical post-ideological present, but rather in the spirit of Frederic Jameson's *enclave in the real*: "it serves to make us read this reality". (Pires do Vale 2021b). Imagine a utopia that offers us a critical point of view from which to inquire at our reality and that in doing so points to a direction rather than to a destination.

Imagine that such utopia is embodied and substantiated in a manifesto and strategic action plan thus becoming aesthetic-democratic. Imagine it goes beyond the notion of cultural democracy of the Porto Santo Charter, (Plano Nacional das Artes et al. 2021), instead acting closer to a roadmap pointing in the direction of developing practices of encounter, of opposing the logic of formatting, and of placing the aesthetic materiality at the centre of our experience, seeking the rematerialisation around which Rancière's aesthetic democracy, (Rancière 2021), pledge could be organised around.

Imagine that the undiscipline and transdisciplinary nature of artistic practices is harnessed to make visible those and that which is rendered invisible or obscured in the current hegemony. Imagine those that like Pina Bausch are scared to speak and that only when using their hands and their bodies can truly express themselves, (Roy 2010), or those who have been deemed less by the hierarchies and mechanisms of neoliberal globalisation, are given a voice and shun a light on. Imagine this struggle for emancipation, for liberation, takes place in the multiplicity of places where the common sense is constructed. Imagine a systematic approach that in doing so disrupts and ruptures the smooth surface of the neoliberal globalising hegemony.

Imagine teachers and educators refusing their place in an education system that would rather fill a vessel than kindle a flame until their work could help (re)humanise the world. Imagine educators as humanists who engage in a pedagogy of desire, a pedagogy against the state, a pedagogy of solidarity. Imagine a pedagogy of (re)humanisation that recognises the emancipatory power of artistic materiality in producing a decolonising turn, in espousing the perspectives and points of view of those whose very existence, very

humanity is questioned, and in constructing a desire for democracy, for equality, for citizenship.

Imagine that such a utopian aesthetic-democratic mission structure of counter-hegemonic nature through critical pedagogy and citizenship practice may nourish the emergence of new worlds and new forms of subjectivity.

I believe that this body of work, which is to the best of my knowledge the first academic foray into Plano Nacional das Artes not as a footnote but as a totalizing subject, can contribute to plant a seed, to lay the groundwork, to offer some insight to how it all began.

There are multiple avenues for research into Plano Nacional das Artes in its multifaceted praxis: its reflection and action, and I hope to see some of the notions explored in this work be further investigated.

Hopefully, I have been able to establish the precondition that any analysis on the subject must never relinquish a transdisciplinary perspective. For when it comes to Plano Nacional das Artes “there are no formulas, it is perfectly undisciplined”. (Brighenti 2021).

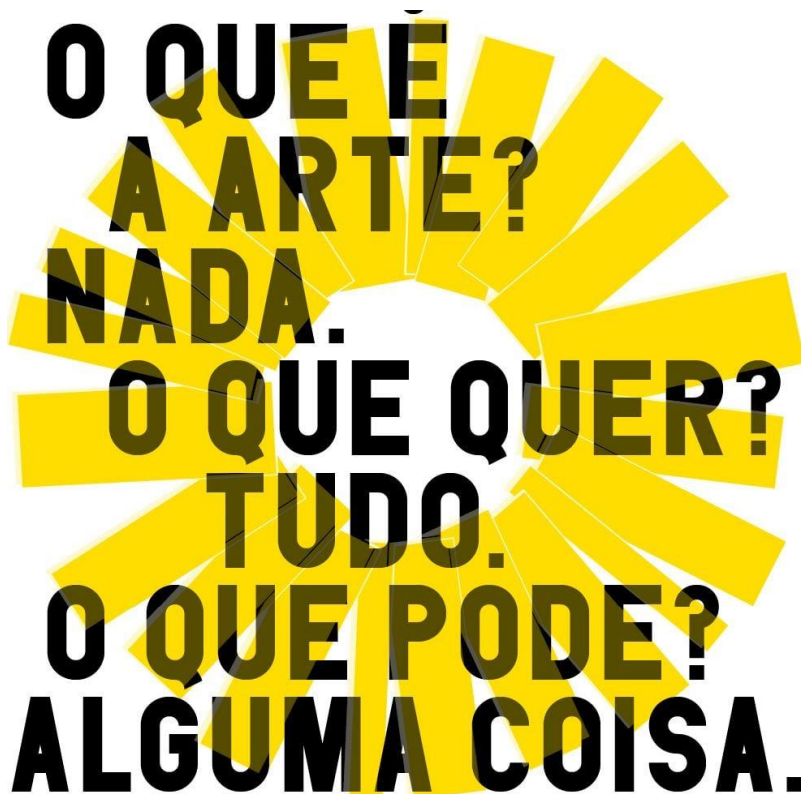


Figure 12 – Poster for PNA © Changes is Good/Plano Nacional das Artes.

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APPENDIX A.

Plano Nacional das Artes' Manifesto: Portico; Values and Premises, Objectives; and Strategic Principles. (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019).

Complying with the Constitution

It is important that we periodically revisit the text of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, in order to refocus our attention on the community and society that we want to build and on the purpose of our actions. Article 73 of the Constitution, having affirmed that 'everyone has the right to education and culture', reads: In cooperation with the media, cultural associations and foundations, cultural and recreational groups, cultural heritage associations, resident's organisations and other cultural agents, the state shall promote the democratisation of culture by encouraging and ensuring access by all citizens to cultural enjoyment and creation.

Following on from this, Article 78 explains that:

1. Everyone has the right to cultural enjoyment and creation, together with the duty to preserve, defend and enhance the cultural heritage.
2. In cooperation with all cultural agents, the state is charged with:
 - a) Encouraging and ensuring access by all citizens to the means and instruments required for cultural activities, and correcting the country's existing asymmetries in this respect;
 - b) Supporting initiatives that stimulate individual and collective creation in its multiple forms and expressions, and the mobility of high quality cultural works and items;
 - c) Promoting the safeguarding and enhancement of the cultural heritage and making it an element that inspires and gives life to a common cultural identity;
 - d) Developing cultural relations with all peoples, especially those that speak Portuguese, and ensuring the defence and promotion of Portuguese culture abroad;
 - e) Articulating the cultural policy with the other sectoral policies. (...)

In an attempt to comply with the intention established by the force of these words, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education instituted the National Plan For The Arts (NPA), for the period 2019-2029, through the Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 42/2019 of 21 February;

- (...) In view of the need to coherently organise, promote and implement the cultural offering for the education community and all citizens, using an approach of lifelong learning and in partnership with public and private entities, a National Plan For The Arts must be established. To this end, it is important to create a structure that is capable of bringing together and integrating work that has already been done and provide it with the logical continuity of a holistic approach, fulfilling the missions of each of the already established programmes and plans.

12

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers also determined the objectives and guidelines of the National Plan For The Arts:

- a) Articulate, enhance and expand the existing cultural and educational offering, specifically that resulting from the mission, purposes and areas of intervention of the following programs and plans:
 - i) the National Reading Plan;
 - ii) the National Cinema Plan;
 - iii) the Aesthetic and Artistic Education Programme;
 - iv) the School Library Network Programme;
 - v) the Portuguese Museum Network;
- b) Enable collaboration with public and private entities;
- c) Strengthen the involvement of the education community in cultural activities;
- d) Encourage the participation of citizens in the arts and continuously provide a range of aesthetic and artistic experiences;
- e) Foster collaboration between artists, educators, teachers and students in order to design teaching and learning strategies that promote an integrated curriculum, based on consolidated management of knowledge and cultural experience;
- f) Mobilise connections between cultural, social and professional agents and facilities;
- g) Favour the territorialisation of cultural and educational policies, mobilising local resources so as to make them relevant agents and participants of teaching and learning processes;
- h) Expand the range of experiences and skills provided by schools, reinforcing interactions with the community and the world;
- i) Raise awareness of cultural institutions and their agents about the social and educational dimension of their mission;
- j) Contribute to the achievement of competency areas defined in the Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling, approved by Dispatch no. 64/9/2017 of 26 July, including those regarding critical and creative thinking and aesthetic and artistic sensibility;
- k) Promote the awareness, integration and meeting of cultures through the artistic and cultural manifestations of different communities.

Portico

Art and Education: international and national commitments

For several decades, UNESCO has played an important role in the promotion of education for sustainable development (ESD). This work, continued and consolidated today by the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, catalogues and analyses the major global issues of our time, calling for urgent change based on new values and principles that enable individual and community action for the construction of a more sustainable society. In 2015, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were established and an ambitious agenda – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – was drawn up with the aim of eradicating poverty and bringing about economic, social and environmental development on a global scale by 2030, advocating the effective realisation of sustainable development based on the principles of universality, inclusion, responsibility, interconnection, peace, tolerance, multiculturalism, citizenship and cooperation, in order to promote the resolution of crises and conflicts, advances in science and technology, the reduction of inequalities and the protection of human rights. Education is crucial in order to achieve sustainable development and it features as an objective on its own in the broad scope of action of the Agenda (SDG 4). It is therefore essential to develop an approach to education that enables learners to make informed decisions and adopt responsible actions that guarantee environmental integrity, economic viability and a fair society for present and future generations.

The Education 2030 Agenda and SDG 4 go beyond the frameworks that characterise the global education movement (Education for All and Millennium Development Goal no. 2, among others), advocating a much broader and more demanding framework of action, specifically regarding three essential points:

- i) Guaranteed access to education from early childhood to university and lifelong learning.
- ii) Commitment to an essentially inclusive education that constitutes a tool to combat inequality.
- iii) Convergence towards a relevant, high quality education, so that the knowledge and skills developed enable individual success and global citizenship.

For UNESCO, an integral education requires involvement in cultural heritage and the arts.

Art is a universal language, which conveys meanings that are impossible in any other kind of language, whether semantic, dialogical or scientific. Thus, education for citizenship, social change and collective well-being is only possible if education includes an artistic and patrimonial dimension. It is now a

scientifically proven fact that art as a personal and cultural expression presents an essential tool for the social and human development of children and young people, developing their perception and imagination, enabling their comprehension of the reality of their surroundings, and developing their critical and creative capacity, constituting an ideal tool for educating emotions.¹

In Portugal, recent legislation has strengthened the role of the arts in education, recognising their structural function. Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling establishes the framework of principles, values and areas of competency that the development of the curriculum must comply with. The Profile advocates inclusive schools that promote better learning for all. The goal is that the development of the Profile's competency areas enables the exercise of an active and informed lifelong citizenship. The document recognises the importance of developing the skill of aesthetic and artistic sensibility. It also identifies problem solving and critical and creative thinking as central skills that need to be stimulated by activities in which aesthetics and art are a tool and goal.

Decree-laws no. 54/2018 and no. 55/2018, on inclusive education and the curriculum respectively, call for inclusive schools that promote better learning – significant and fundamental to citizenship – for all. This implies that schools be given autonomy to develop a curriculum that is appropriate for specific contexts and the needs of their students. Curricular autonomy and flexibility enables schools to manage the curriculum of primary and secondary education themselves, using basic curricular frameworks, allowing for the incorporation of the arts and, consequently, the proposals and projects that have been developed by the Aesthetic and Artistic Education Programme, National Reading Plan, National Cinema Plan, School Library Network and Portuguese Museum Network, now united by a common strategy, the mission of the National Plan For The Arts. It is also important to refer to the National Education Strategy for Citizenship, which aims to develop skills for a culture of democracy and learning with an impact on individual civic attitudes and interpersonal and intercultural relationships. The Strategy presents an opportunity for access and the establishment of

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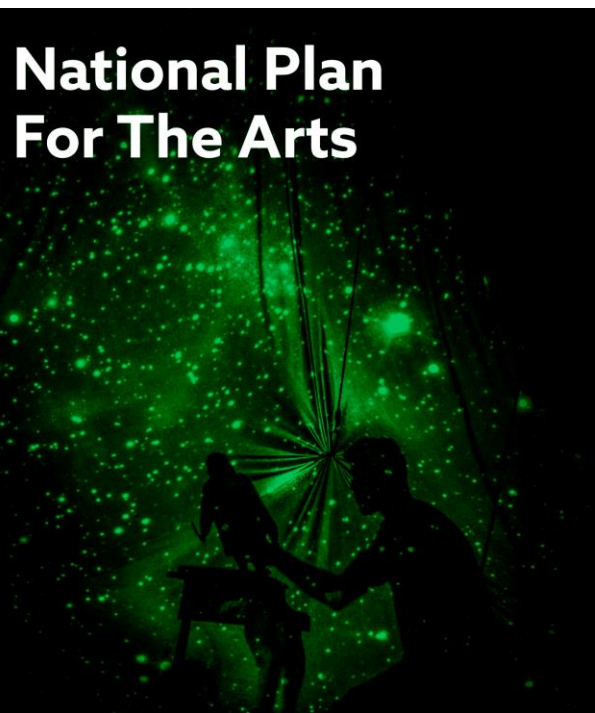
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the arts in schools, taking into account the coincidence of the themes of citizenship and development and those that have appeared in artistic manifestations over the years.

Thus, following the analysis of documents and international recommendations on education, art and heritage and national legislation for the area of education; after analysing reports, studies and national plans previously carried out²; and considering the suggestions and concerns of agents in the sector, we present this strategic five-year plan for 2019-2024, hoping that it will form the basis of an action in conjunction with reflection, discussion and collaboration.

2. Namely the report *Artistic education and the promotion of the arts from a public policy perspective* (coord. Ana Isabel Santos Silva, from 2000); the *National Plan for Education and Culture*, (coord. Jorge Barreto Xavier, from 2004); the *2020 Culture Studies*, (organised by Jorge Barreto Xavier, from 2014); and the *National Strategy for Education and Culture*, (by Jorge Barreto Xavier, from 2015).



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Educational activity © Museu do Dinheiro

Aesthetic sensibility and critical thinking

Aesthetic and artistic sensibility and critical and creative thinking are identified as essential competency areas in the Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling.

A close relationship with the arts, in all their diversity, allows for the development of these apparently unrelated skills: on the one hand they require the education of sensibility, awareness, and recognition of what one feels; on the other, they develop a capacity for critical thinking and interpretation, resisting the obvious or immediate message, seeking other meanings, other points of view and other possibilities. The education of aesthetic sensibility and critical and creative thought thus allow for greater personal autonomy.

An ongoing relationship with the arts and heritage of different cultures also teaches people to respect the experience of the other and be more receptive to their culture and interpretation of the world, promoting exchange, discussion and knowledge of criteria of taste and their historical evolution. Thus, they accept the complexity of the world and the cultures in it, of the unity and diversity of human beings, rejecting the fear of difference and superficial facileness of quick and well-worn responses.

Uncertainty and creativity

The OECD, in the Future of Education and Skills 2030 project, asks two key questions that we should respond to as a society:

— What type of knowledge, abilities, attitudes and values will students need to be successful and shape their world?

— How can educational systems develop this set of skills?

If educating is preparing for the future (which does not exist and which we are not familiar with), education needs to prepare for the unknown, not just for what is already known to be true. In this context, the arts are a way of nurturing imagination and creativity. Being prepared to solve problems requires having a developed imagination and knowing how to deal with that which escapes us, that which we do not have complete control over, without anxiety. It requires learning to manage uncertainty as part of life, to not be afraid of making mistakes, and to be resilient.

Creativity depends on our diverse stimuli: the more varied and significant the experiences, the greater the creative potential. They are the raw material that we use to create new things and ideas: combining, putting together, reconnecting the unexpected and challenging conventions, without being afraid of failure or following

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our intuition, not repeating the familiar, feeding our curiosity and ability to question. In a society that faces challenges resulting from globalisation and accelerated technological development, where artificial intelligence already plays a decisive role, the emotional, social, creative and critical skills provided by the arts may be an essential tool for adapting to the world to come.

Undisciplinary and transdisciplinary

Excessive specialisation and curricular homogenisation can be dangerous. Fragmented disciplines, closed off to one another, do not allow for the comprehension of the complexity of the world. Proximity and familiarity with the arts and the creative process can stimulate transdisciplinary dynamics, the combination and integration of knowledge learned in the various fragmented disciplines in the curriculum, allowing for an overall view.

The undisciplinary power of the arts, unsettling, disrupting and calling into question the usual order and certainties, can open a space of freedom for personal and collective construction: a place and a time of questioning and opening. The greatest power of creativity, greater than creating things, is changing our perspective of the world and of ourselves – and transforming our lives and those of others. The creative process promotes not only exterior, but interior transformations. It imbalances in order to rebalance.

Democratisation and cultural democracy

While the aesthetic experience is a form of validation of individual and subjective existence, it is also the promise and expression of a community: of the possibility of living and sharing that experience with others; and of the communal shaping of our experience, influenced by others and influencing others. Participative cultural experience forms communities that become increasingly integrative, insofar as the transmission of and access to artistic manifestations and cultural heritage is democratised, allowing for a sense of belonging and encouraging citizen participation, giving them a voice and valuing their knowledge, practices and traditions. Thus, we can all contribute to the culture of the community.

Culture and mediation

Culture, which can be understood as the formation of attention, allows us to expand our human experience and reshape the horizon of possibilities in which we find ourselves.

Contrary to the idea that we are born with immediate knowledge of ourselves or of the community that we wish to build, we assume that cultural manifestations are the necessary mediation for the personal recognition of each of us and of the community that we are and which we design: we build our identity in dialogue with this deposit of humanity that resides in heritage (material and immaterial) and in works of art. We refer to culture and art in the plural, considering the multiplicity of their manifestations – music, dance, literature, visual arts, cinema, performance, photography, theatre, architecture, design, multimedia, etc.

Art and life

What would life be without music and literature, architecture and design, cinema and painting, dance and theatre?

We understand the arts as part of life – and not a parallel world, situated beyond our existence or residing in an isolated sphere of 'culture'. In the words of Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, in her intervention in the Constituent Assembly, on 2 September 1975: "[...] Culture does not exist to embellish life, but to transform it – so that man can build and build himself in conscience, in truth and freedom, and in justice (...)". In this respect, aesthetics is not much different from ethics or politics. With this certainty, we hope to do what many artists have attempted since the 1960s and 70s: combine art and life, revealing them as one unit. Thus, we value not only the artistic object, but also the creative process and aesthetic attitude.

Play and freedom

The arts can teach us the invaluable lesson of gratuity: that of free time, without any reason or motive, that of disinterested pleasure before beauty. In a time marked by utilitarianism and the desire for efficiency and productivity, this subversion is decisive. It is the same subversion that we appreciate in play, games and parties. Thus, the participation of society and learning communities in the arts and artistic expressions leads to the promotion of education associated with pleasure, games and creativity. Feeling and enjoying oneself cannot be in opposition to learning and knowing. Artistic practices are able to renew pedagogical processes – avoiding an instrumental logic of the use of the arts and their domestication. Therefore,

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by combining education and culture (in the plural) we can foster the experience of an 'open space' which values contemplation, play, discovery, gratuity and freedom. It is a way of saying 'yes' to the visual force of life – without the weight of fear of error. As this lesson attributed to Aristophanes indicates, 'education is kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel'.

Multiple languages and inclusion

We understand education as a lifelong process of learning, which builds the fundamental knowledge, abilities and attitudes for a person's integral development in a participative and collective way. The arts, cultural activities, and access to material and immaterial heritage increase the quantity and quality of a person's experiences and skills, opening them up to the community and the world. School, as a learning community in which all members are cocreators of this learning, should promote access to the diversity of heritage and the appropriation of different artistic languages and expressions. There are multiple languages and different forms of personal expression and understanding of the world that we should help to develop: different languages in which we can speak and understand ourselves. The arts thus allow us to find other codes that complement those which we have put at the centre of our society and education: verbal language and logical reasoning. We overrationalise education and fail to put enough emphasis on emotional development, our relationship with our bodies, the value of autonomy, the ability to deal with challenges and failures, and the pleasure of learning, interpreting and intervening in the world. It is necessary to educate and train in various languages, intelligences and ways of communicating. Not everyone fits the predominant and generally imposed mould of logical/verbal reasoning. Consequently, such people feel excluded, but artistic expression enables them to find their place, their element, a path to personal fulfilment and participation in the common good. Thus, the arts can develop a person's sense of belonging to the community – particularly for those who are in a marginalised or vulnerable situation. School is only for everyone if it excludes no one, assuming that one person's problem is everyone's challenge.

Historical condition and infinite tasks

Knowledge of heritage and the arts provides us with a historical awareness and inscribes us as part of an infinite task – which we receive as a legacy that we should renew for the future. We are part of a community and joint effort that precedes and succeeds us. Thus, the promotion of an education that values heritage and the arts reinforces citizens' feeling of belonging and helps in the reconstruction of historically rooted communities, aware of the multiple cultural influences to which we are indebted. This historical awareness, if broad and authentic, instead of generating feelings of nostalgia and nationalism, can help to knock down walls, interrogate habitual borders and prepare for the change that will shape the world and our lives.

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Objectives

Euphoria2, 2019, Madalena Vitorino and Joana Guerra
© João Mariano 1000 idios

Guarantee citizens access to artistic enjoyment and cultural production, correcting inequalities (social, economic or territorial) in this access.

Ensure the centrality of the arts and heritage in lifelong training – because education is only complete if it integrates the cultural and artistic dimension.

Enhance the education system so that artistic education may be a tool for the development of the skills that feature in the Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling; to achieve compliance with legislation concerning inclusive education and to establish a strategy for schools that promotes citizenship skills.

Foster collaboration between artistic agents, the education community and other actors in order to design teaching and learning strategies that promote an integrated curriculum, without barriers between schools and their surroundings.

Together with artists and cultural institutions, reinforce awareness of their educational dimension and social impact.

Raise awareness of the value of cultural heritage as a factor of cohesion and belonging, and of the arts as promoters of the integral formation of citizens.

Promote recognition of the value of cultural differences and of dialogue between cultures; as well as the importance of diversity of voices, territories and resources.

Support initiatives that stimulate individual and collective creation, bringing together artists and non-artists, and promoting the circulation of these works throughout the country so that they can be experienced by a greater number of citizens.

Produce teaching resources and strategies supported by the arts and heritage that promote the transversality of the curriculum.

Create an online platform (NPA portal) to: gather information; map and raise awareness of cultural offerings in the areas of art-education and art-community in the country; connect institutions and encourage the circulation of artistic projects; and provide teaching resources.

Train formal and informal educators, artists and mediators, developing artistic and pedagogical concepts, practices and processes that promote creativity and critical thinking.

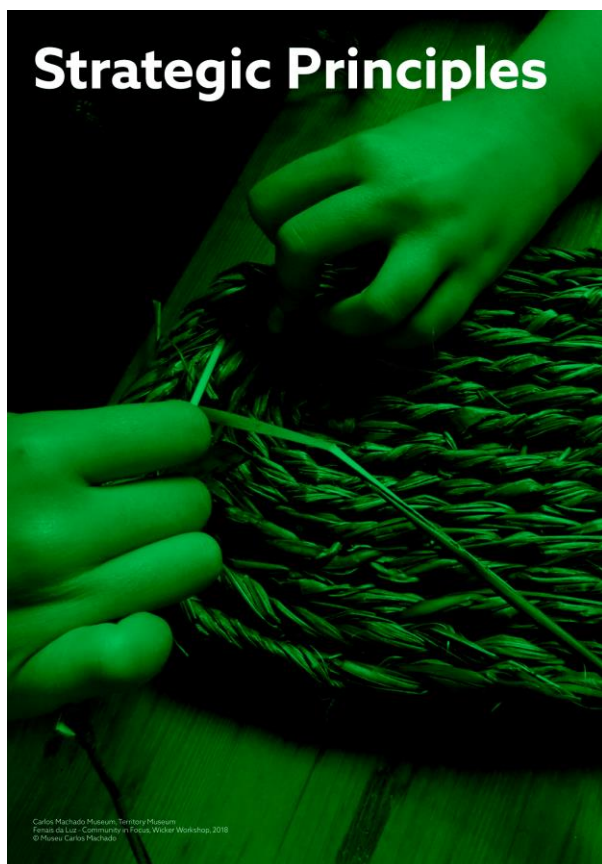
Produce and disseminate knowledge in areas of the NPA.

Continuously monitor and evaluate the results and impact of the programmes and measures, for a more appropriate analysis of reality, adapting future steps of the NPA according to this evaluation.



Objectives

Plano Nacional das Artes' Manifesto – Objectives (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 23).



Strategic Principles

Carlos Machado Museum Territory Museum
Festas da Luz - Community in Focus, Wicker Workshop, 2018
© Museu Carlos Machado

Draw attention to the importance of the arts and education in the lives of communities and citizens – part of our mission is to demonstrate and defend it, thus valuing artists, education professionals, institutions and heritage.

Territorialise: we are a national plan that takes into consideration the specificity of the local and different communities.

Give visibility to exemplary and often solitary work that has been done and is being done – without the assumption of a clean slate or starting from scratch.

Create structural, political and legislative conditions to facilitate access of citizens to the arts, accommodate the many high quality projects already in existence and support the creation of new ones.

Stimulate networks of creation, collaboration and circulation in the areas of art-community and art-education and build bridges between cultural and educational agents to facilitate their projects.

Promote the cultural commitment of people, organisations and communities (in particular to heritage, arts and artists in their local area, their Km²), enabling them to evaluate this commitment, in order to reinforce its sustainability.

Hold all social and economic sectors accountable to a cultural commitment.

Understand schools systemically, as part of a complex and extensive ecosystem.

Take advantage of the creative and undisciplinary power of multiple artistic manifestations in order to improve the work of the education system, making it more transdisciplinary and inclusive: contributing to academic achievement, personal development and the enabling of an active and informed citizenship, following the completion of compulsory education.

Mobilise the arts in schools as a resource for different disciplines – emphasising their transdisciplinary dynamic and not confining them to artistic disciplines.

Carry out work in schools based on the guidelines established in the Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling; the curricular frameworks approved in DL 55/2018; the National Education Strategy for Citizenship; Decree-Law 54/2018 on inclusive education; and Edict no. 181/2019 of 11 June.

Work together with the National Reading Plan, the School Library Network, the National Cinema Plan, the Aesthetic and Artistic Education Programme, the Portuguese Museum Network – and the recently created National Sound Archive –, in order to articulate and enhance the work of all of these bodies, building bridges between them to establish consistency with regard to objectives, values and intervention strategies.

Collaborate with public and private bodies to facilitate the objectives of the NPA.

Use academic research to create impact indicators adapted to the qualitative assessment needs of the NPA's continuous programmes, projects and measures.



Strategic Principles

Plano Nacional das Artes' Manifesto – Strategic Principles (Plano Nacional das Artes' Executive Committee 2019, 25).

APPENDIX B.

Interview conducted by the author with Plano Nacional das Artes commissioner Paulo Pires do Vale (Pires do Vale 2021b) and deputy-commissioner Sara Brighenti (Brighenti 2021) on October 07th, 2021, via Microsoft Teams. This interview was conducted in Portuguese and was later translated by the author.

What ideas and concepts guided the creation and construction of PNA's manifesto and strategic action plan?

PIRES DO VALE: So to name some core ideas. The first one is what we were ordered, to bring citizens closer to the arts, heritage and culture, especially those within school age because of the connection between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education. That bridge, that relationship was fundamental. As we structured the manifesto and its measure we understood that it had to be systemic, so another key idea, that which has to do with system. To understand that we did not have to speak only to the schools, but rather to the system as whole, the system where the school is included. To the municipalities, the ministries, the cultural institutions, the museums, the theatres, the universities, the businesses, that is, to think of the village as a whole, rather than the schools as the only place for PNA to interfere. In that regard, there are measures for all of these agents, in order to transform in a deeper sense, which is what interests us. Create structure in all of these agents so that one compensate for the other, that they support each other, and that there is this notion of an entire community working towards the same goal, that of cultural responsibility.

Therefore, still linked to this first idea, is the intention to bring down walls between institutions, be it the school and the community, the museum and the school, or the municipalities and the institutions on its territory. To bring down walls by working articulately in a network. The second strong idea and that is behind all of PNA is the intention to undiscipline, that is, not to think of the arts as a side-line discipline separate from life, as something that is closed in a box and that is often considered a luxury. In that sense, the proposal we make to schools is not to address the artistic disciplines but school as a whole, as an educational community, where we say all teachers, be they of maths, philosophy, history, Portuguese, sciences, or the arts, are cultural agents.

They can use their discipline as a way to get closer to the arts, heritage and culture, and in turn they can use these as tools for the development of their teachings. This aspect is fundamental. When they are not specialists, and we do not believe in that idea, precisely under this notion of undisciplining, they ask for help and support from cultural institutions, and should feel from these that connection and support.

We often say, what can a sort of third motto of PNA, that the school is a cultural hub, in the same way that the cultural institutions are an educational territory. So this idea of subverting what you are expecting from a school, a museum, a theatre or a heritage site, is to say that cultural space is educational territory and the school a fundamental cultural centre.

Another thought that shaped and still shapes the PNA and that we have been developing, is the paradigm shift that we have come to realise to be absolutely necessary, that is to drop the notion of cultural democratisation and starting to assume the lexicon and practice of cultural democracy. It means abandoning hierarchised notions of culture and depreciation of cultural manifestations in detriment of others, because that is also to devalue citizens that do not feel connect, part or any sense of belonging of those other cultural manifestations, thus feeling always on the “outside”. Thus, they think culture is a matter of elites and specific groups. To end this symbolic violence seems to us of paramount importance and we have highlighted it, that the PCE projects are dependent from their territory and not from a centralised governing that orders projects where they do not make sense. There is a monitoring, but there is mainly an active listening and a passing of responsibility to the territory.

BRIGHENTI: I would just add another aspect that was really important at the beginning and that as everything to do with what Paulo was saying, which was this attentive listening of the community we were going to serve. That meant that for three months we did this exercise of knocking on the door of teachers, young people, cultural agents, and artists, and ask them what was not yet done and what they thought needed to be done in order to promote the connection of people with arts and culture. That listening was a great lesson and it highlights that idea that PNA is in fact in the middle, in the mediator role. It could not be at the end because it has an end in sight. If it has ten years to become institutionalised and disappear it can never become an “institutional” space, it has always to be a place that promotes the sustainability of the institution. I think that it is very much along those lines that we have been working on. Connecting people, projects, and ideas.

PIRES DO VALE: Let me just point to another two ideas that are behind PNA and its manifesto. First, to not assume that our audience or whom we talk to are on the same level that we are, in regard to understanding the importance of arts, heritage and culture. So it is necessary to justify and to argue, and not to think that others have already understood or comprehended, and from that the idea of having a manifesto and not just a set of measures. A strategy that was and is important, as it will always be in anything we do, to clarify concepts and to state what and why we want what we want. Lastly, we do not want to fall prey to “eventuality”, of making events, but rather of creating structures. We do not want flare and pomp, it requires a different work, more than to be noticed, we need to create structures that will endure. So, no small or micro events that in truth will not change anything, that is not we are interested in.

Which principles oriented the composition of PNA’s executive commission and team? Do you think these still orient the structure of the PNA’s team?

PIRES DO VALE: The first invite was for me as commissioner and I invited deputy commissioner Sara Brighenti precisely because she had during her career developed a set of competences and characteristics in which I was interest in to accompany me. On one hand, the relationship with museum’s educational services. Sara has not only worked in these but she has given training and written on the matter. On the other hand, there were a set characteristics that were crucial, on the side of organisation and administration, that Sara was well competent in having already created and directed a museum. Also, from a thematic perspective having been a teacher, director of educational service and had a lot of experience in the area was determinant for the Plan. The Ministry of Education appointed the other deputy-commissioner, with competences in administrative and financial areas. And that is how the team began. Afterwards, we invited a senior technician from the field of heritage, Maria Amélia Fernandes, who came from DGPC and thus had a connection with the Ministry of Culture. Meanwhile, we invited another senior technician, Maria Emanuel Albergaria, with competences in the area of education as teacher, but which also had notable work with museums and educational services in the Azores, in São Miguel, and in Lisbon in the National Council of Education. Therefore, she was precisely the bridge between education and culture.

As the team grew we asked the Ministry of Education for the allocation of teachers and we were interested from the start that these were from distinct disciplines. If there is a crucial point to note is the transdisciplinary character of the team. From the beginning, the first two teachers, one was from Maths, Maria João Bravo, and the other from visual arts, Maria João Tudela. That diversity was furthered as we asked for additional elements, and today we have teachers of geography, physical education, history and Portuguese. That is, the Plan's team is multidisciplinary precisely because we want to show from the start that the arts are not a separate realm, or that culture is not an empire of a few connected to the arts. The team itself is built in an undisciplined way.

BRIGHENTI: It is a team that has a lot of working experience, but on the other hand it was also always intent in having its door open for internships, so that there was an integration of young people. It is especially important that the team is capable of being inter-generational because it is your generation (the author's) that has to bring us inputs for what we are doing.

PIRES DO VALE: And being also national (the team). That is, as PNA further develops and inserts itself in the territory, it needs to find these intermunicipal coordinators that are on the ground accompanying the schools. These activators of the Plano are all throughout, in Viana do Castelo, in Minho, another two in Porto, one in Viseu, another in Coimbra, in Tomar there is the Academia PNA coordinator – Maria Luísa Oliveira, in Lisbon another four, one in Alentejo, another two in Algarve, and in Leiria there will be another one. The idea is precisely to cover the territory as the need arises. To have a presence, to have an arm that can reach these people's territories can help develop PNA, especially in the relationship between schools and cultural institutions.

How would you describe PNA's navigation of the public administrative bureaucratic apparatus?

PIRES DO VALE: If there is a style in PNA and there is, I think there is a particular style in PNA to make things happen. It is not just content, we believe from the start that form and content are a unity, and as such, there is a style in how to deal with people, with others and with what we do. Part of it is dusting off this connection to culture and the arts that obviously interests us, and that has also to do with the debureacratized way we like to be and work. Obviously, there is the minimum required formalism and bureaucracy, but one

of the great difficulties, as any statal sector would attest to, is the administrative and financial aspect because we are a small structure that depends on other services for these aspects. That raises some issues and as we come along we have learned to deal with and to manage those bureaucracies that often are hindrances. Such as the time things take and we that have limited time, which we want and which makes us work with a sense of urgency that is our way of doing things. Not in the sense of doing them clumsily but doing them with the necessary speed. It has not always been possible to answer to what we want and to the measures we want to develop. We know with whom we want to make them, we know what we want to do, we just have not been always able to them in the useful time, but we are learning. A good example, it was that conscience that made the ministries of Culture and Education transfer PNA administrative duties from DGArtes to GEPAC in a recent Ministries Council Resolution, which extends PNA to higher education and universities and creates another place for a senior technician for the administrative and financial area. Therefore, as we face some obstacles, we look to overcome them, also with the help of the ministries.

If we consider the adage Utopia translates to not place, Utopia is not a destination but a direction, would you describe PNA as utopic? If so, why?

PIRES DO VALE: The answer is yes. It is a utopic project, this desire of bring closer the arts, heritage and culture is obviously a utopia, we understand that clearly. But utopias work not as something, as you alluded in your question, like an incoming eventual future, but rather already as a clearing in reality. Meaning that utopia serves, and this Plano serves, as a sort of guide for the present, not for the future. Frederic Jameson, a north American philosopher, said that utopia was like an enclave in the real. It means that it is already here, it is not outsider, and it is not for some future. It serves to make us read this reality. From the notion of justice, which can be called utopic, I can discern what is the injustice that surrounds me, but if I do not have that utopic notion of justice then the injustice that surrounds me is nothing but reality. Reality is unfair, but it is only fair or unfair, if I know what justice is. That notion of justice can still be utopic, but it is the only way for us to guide our lives. By not being simply content with what is reality, with what is in front of us. Utopia makes us walk towards a certain path, but it also allow us a critical perspective of the present. Therefore, PNA indicates where we want to go, but it also lets us see critically what is already here. So, if there was no Plano, likewise if the other

utopias did not exist, there would be no critical perspective, that is, there would be no critical points of view. The Plano, even though it is utopic, has its feet on the ground. It is not a set of good intentions, it is rather composed of measures that can be evaluated and implemented. When that is not the case, of good intentions we do not want to live of, we will be aware of the need to evaluate and reverse what is necessary and to advance on those measures most likely to reach our goals. That is why PNA is not a set of measures, but a manifesto, and in that sense it is clearly utopic, in the best sense of the word.

BRIGHENTI: I was going to take that idea that if there is an adjective that people attribute to the Plano is this idea of ambition. They often ask us if the ambition is not unreasonable. It is not, in the sense that we felt it was the necessary one, and therefore, we did not want nor more nor less that what seemed to us necessary for this ten-year period. To reach this utopia we had to write the manifesto, this path, and then to structure that path in a set of actions with designated partner, actionable time, where all measures intersect in time and concept. And so, if the manifesto is the way, the end, then the strategy is like a road map for how to arrive to that place.

PIRES DO VALE: Ernst Bloch has a very beautiful expression that interests me greatly from this point of view of an enclave in reality. Bloch use the idea that utopia is like a telescope that allows us to see far away, but that in truth it analysis what is near. It is a telescope to watch reality up close. In that sense, that image is what we have tried to achieve. I would also highlight this idea, we often feel and people think that we are very ambitious. I think that is the only way to do anything, and not to do or to think small. And we in Portugal sometimes tend to do it like that, to do just a little bit, because we do not believe in people and in their capacities. On the contrary, we trust in peoples' capacity for change and so we think big.

If we consider neoliberalism as the constructed hegemony of the present, would you describe PNA, in conception and action, as a counter-hegemonic project? If so, why?

PIRES DO VALE: Yes, that is, counter-hegemonic because, in the sense of the notion of cultural democracy that I touched on before, it values what are local traditions that are ignored by globalisation and that is far from those huge projects of globalisation that we know at the level of the cultural economy. As such, the furthering of those different forms of culture and not only of the hegemonic culture of the cultural industries, is a form of

counterculture or counter economy. On the other hand, we are not naive and clearly understand that we need the economy and the economic and enterprising agents, and so, in the structure of measures of PNA there is the dimension of promoting cultural conscience, cultural responsibility, of the enterprising agents. One of the Plano's measures is precisely to help business owners to understand the importance that they have or can have in the culture of their km². To help them understand how they can support local culture, a cultural or artistic association, or how they can bring their workers closer to cultural manifestations through the promotion of volunteering in the cultural area and so forth. Clearly, we want to engage in those arenas, but in favour of a wider perspective on the notion of culture, and therefore, not so commercial and globalised. With this idea, of the possibility that we place value, is not for us to be closed, but it is for us to value what is cultural diversity. One of the great issues with globalisation and cultural hegemony is the loss of diversity, and what interests us from the perspective of the cultural democracy is to protect and maintain that diversity.

BRIGHENTI: Exactly, I was just going to add that idea of a motto that we established for PNA from the beginning, for all but with everyone. That word, with, implies a diversity that means that there cannot be a vertical leadership, but a leadership that supports the implementation with and not for. What Paulo spoke before relative to the difference between cultural democratisation and democracy. That speaks to the origin of PNA's thinking, so naturally it could never be globalising nor hegemonic, and neither could it uphold that kind of verticality.

Which role would you say that affection and desire play in the conception and action of PNA?

PIRES DO VALE: They are fundamental. On one hand, because we understand that from a theory point of view there is no form of learning that is not through affection. So, learning and feeling are connected, all studies point to it. And citing perhaps one of the most notable of those theorists, António Damásio, who reveals that there is a connection between affectivity, comprehension, and knowledge that we can never forego. Therefore, we often reinforce the importance of connecting education to the ludic, to game, to playfulness, and also to the arts. Culture as part of that ludic universe, which is fundamental. As for desire, the way people adhere and participate in the Plano is

dependent precisely on desire. One of the most beautiful articles that has been written on the PNA is titled “a plan called desired”, because what I explained the journalist was that we do not impose on schools, they only work with PNA if they wish to do so, and the first moment of that connection is the manifestation of desire. The school writes us to say they wish to work with us. That is the start of this relationship. There is a pedagogy of desire, that also means that to be desired means to look desirable. In other words, I was previously trying to explain that there is a style unique to PNA and I think that begins by us being passionate in the way we speak, in the interest we show when presenting arts, heritage, and culture as desirable. It will only be desired if we are desirable, in a way that is not bureaucratised, and so, not imposed. Moreover, this areas could not be imposed, they had to live the experience of desire, of being something very strongly connected to affection and affectivity. Right now, in this post-pandemic state I would reinforce that point, that connection between teachers, students, and the arts as a force that can help approach this matters of affectivity, of feeling, of what we have been through and of what we are still going through.

BRIGHENTI: It is a very important idea. This Plano is not a plan that follows a set of normalised rules, it is made from the relationship with people, from listening, empathy, of this being in this place to answer to this time and space and to those that need it. It could never be the same for everyone, in the global sense that each one finds its own answer, and that is their desire. It needs to be highly flexible, adaptable, and creative, that is the matrix of the Plano. There are no formulas, it is perfectly undisciplined.

Citizenship, civic education within the existing socio-political order or promotion of political subjectivity and agency. Which one fits PNA’s vision? And why?

PIRES DO VALE: First, to say that we felt from the star, as I was saying before, that the connection to the arts, heritage, and culture was not only dependant on disciplines and that we felt that working matters of citizenship was an obvious relationship. Well, because artists have over the course of time worked them, that is, the matters of citizenship are the very wealth of the artistic experience in all ages. On the other hand, it allowed for the arts to display their transdisciplinary and undisciplining nature. It interests us obviously to promote critical thinking, another line of the Plano. The arts allow us to access feelings and emotions, the development of the aesthetic experience and of the artistic sensibility,

it also interests us that we never fail to remember that the arts are a motor of critical and creative thinking. In that sense, we are not interested in a language of imposition, but precisely in one of questioning, of reflection. Not being propagandistic, in any way, and not to stop posing questions and to not be afraid of those problems. That is the freedom that the arts have, precisely of not having a single or steering thinking, that we wish can reach the school. When we think of citizenship that can be worked through the arts, it is not because they propose a single path, but because they makes us question, they are ambiguous. Art's character is precisely its ambiguity, its multiple interpretation. To be able to promote them in relation to matters of citizenship is fundamental, in fact, there is never a well taught citizenship question that does not recognise that there are multiple points of view. That always interests us. The arts allow for the development of that critical perspective.

BRIGHENTI: I am going to just add another perspective, a rather important one, that we have not mentioned yet. That is the place of PNA within the national politics on education that emerge around 2018 with various resolutions and decrees that come to place the student at the centre of learning. The question of inclusiveness, this idea that he has to construct his learning from a critical perspective and with the tools that he brings as a person, And also, that connection of what is learned with what is lived. That is profoundly connected to the national strategy for the education of citizenship. PNA was not born without a father and a mother, it has in fact a connection within what are the national politics for education and culture. Specifically, in education, with the global goal that is the Student's Profile at the End of Mandatory Education, which places as goal that the student must be a citizen with political agency when he finishes mandatory education. We, considering that the arts can be both a vehicle and an ending extraordinarily important to reach this goal, decided to also work these matters of citizenship as our own. On the other hand, because we speak so much of transdisciplinarity, the arts also allow us to connect teaching from various disciplines with life, and citizenship is a way of being in life as informed and active citizens.

How do you view PNA's successes and achievements so far? Do you believe you have been able to affect change?

PIRES DO VALE: We being ambitious we have our goals set very high, the bar is very high. We understand clearly of the much that it is still to be done, but also of what has been accomplished. When we visit schools, when we receive messages from cultural institutions, of artists that have been working as resident Artist in Residence (PAR), for example, we can appreciate that there is already a lot of positive achievements. When we see the impact that the Porto Santo Charter can have, which we also developed, or other proposals that we have made, we feel PNA in motion and advancing. It is important to recognise that PNA has not worked in a single school year that has not been affected by the pandemic, with all the changes that it implied in measures that were to be activated further along and that required us to expedite and give a quicker response. As is the case of our digital platform that hosts transdisciplinary pedagogic resources, and which would not be possible without some irreverence from our part. Where do we see the results? To start with sixty-five school groups, and in the next year during a pandemic to raise the number to 146, and this year to surpass the 230 and going for almost 250 schools, to have even in these pandemic years such a regular growth and reach all of these schools, about 28% of all schools nationwide, leave us very happy. On the other hand, to feel from the ministries of culture and education, in what they do and propose, the recognition of the work we do and their desire to work with us, show us that interest. Understanding that what we set in motion has continuity, for example, the relationship with universities. This relationship between university and culture, that now the Rectors Council's work contemplates and which will continue to work in that sense. To feel that there are the municipalities themselves that want to organize in a more strategic way to link schools and cultural institutions, and to work with us in that way. Another, the Plan for the Promotion of School Success, of the Ministry of Education, has considered the Artist in Residence (PAR) as one of his measures. That is to say that these are signs that we have that our proposals make sense, which are being well received and that they are desirable. There is desire that they can be implemented and can continue to be implemented. I would also point to another area that has been a success, the PNA Academy. The teachers training actions have been highly requested, and we have reached more than 2200 teachers in this last year. It was also another area that we were able to develop even during the pandemic, as the training centres and the municipalities show the desire to work with us from these training actions. And then, the success of seeing the team growing, not only the number of schools, but of members. If we started with an initial core of five people, right now, we are twenty-one. In three years that is a big growth that makes us very happy

and feeling that the future will be even better. It seems to us fundamental also to take note of difficulties and weaknesses so that we can then take safe steps. Where we find some obstacles, for example, in the hiring of Artists in Residence (PAR), we have tried to find other ways, as with the Plan for the Promotion of School Success, that has a simplified hiring method. But we never put our arms down and have already asked legal experts to help us find more efficient hiring models.

BRIGHENTI: As our ambition is to create structure, it means that these first years imply the transformation of behaviours and forms of thinking in that systemic, territorialised, endemic sense. It means that the next five years (2024-2029) we are going to see a more concrete, solid, and visible materialisation of all the work we are laying out. There are some clear evidence, as Paulo highlighted. There is an evidence that is key for us, that is the trust that the ministries of culture and education have in the measures that PNA is implementing. That this exponential growth of the team, with the allocation of teachers by the Ministry of Education, is structural. Therefore, for now these evidence that might seem not that visible, I believe are within the expectations of our ambition.

PIRES DO VALE: And this second Ministries Council Resolution that restructures PNA and its team, and that opens it to Higher Education also signals that growth. I felt that was important to highlight.

In what do you think PNA has been least successful at? And why?

PIRES DO VALE: It actually converges with that question of bureaucracy and administration. We having to learn to deal with the administrative system's slowness and high specificity. Not having that administrative structure within our own house limits and impedes some easy to implement measures that would otherwise have already advanced. It is a problem, an obstacle. If everything were to be faster and administratively easier, we could be further along in some measures that rely on hiring. Public hiring is a difficulty with which we have to learn to deal with.

Can you tell me what you await with expectation in the future of PNA?

PIRES DO VALE: I await with anticipation that we can find to some of the measures we propose, for example, that of the Artist in Residence (PAR), a hiring model that is fast

and efficient, and that places artists that wish to work in schools in these in a quicker way. That is to me one of the great desires, very practical at the same time, but that could make a lot of difference for schools, students, and artists. That is for me one of my greatest desires for the immediate future.

BRIGHENTI: I await with anticipation this giant ambition of PNA, of creating a more direct connection between people and the arts, heritage, and culture. That is, that it demystifies this idea that popular cultural is for some and high culture for others. I would really like that through interpretation and through schools that we can create a more accessible idea of culture in its various nuances. And that limits of access, of taste and subjectivity, are not created without understanding what it is. I await, in fact, that in terms of political strategy, not so much at a national level, but more so at the local level, we can find ways to bring people closer to culture, because I think that is what make people's lives happier and complete. That is part of that unreasonable ambition, that utopia, of PNA, which is what we want.