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# Abstracts

## EURAU 2016

European Symposium on Research  
in Architecture and Urban Design

Ion Mincu University of  
Architecture and Urbanism  
Bucharest, Romania



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Bucharest, September 28 - 30th, 2016

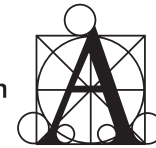
# IN BETWEEN SCALES



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## Fernando FERREIRA

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Fernando P Ferreira (1987, Porto, Portugal) is a reseArch(itect), an unstoppable thinker, whose practice relies on the interaction between creative practice and the public realm, with a background related to urban research, artistic/social practices, media representation and writing. Based in Porto, Ferreira graduated from the School of Architecture, University of Minho (Guimarães, Portugal), with an honorable Master's degree in City and Territory. Since his graduation, Ferreira has been working in several fields: he was a guest critic at the Urban Laboratory in EAUM (2011); participated and won the European 11 Guimarães as a team leader (2011); received special Mention in European 13 Azenha do Mar (2015); and collaborated in architectural practices based in Porto (And-Ré Architects) and in London (AHMM Architects) between 2011-2015. He has also been invited to participate in several international competitions and workshops (2012-2015).

Currently, Ferreira is an invited assistant at the Urban Laboratory in the School of Architecture, University of Minho, where he is developing his design as research and creative writing.

## Cidália FERREIRA SILVA

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Cidália Ferreira Silva is an Assistant Professor of Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Minho's School of Architecture. Her research on Time expands the field of architecture to investigate other opportunities to engage meaningfully with contemporary places-life. By see(d)(k)ing Time, she holds uncertainty as part of the creative process that crosses time-space, embracing "(not-)Knowing" as the primary focus of her research. She is passionate about the acts of thinking, writing, and generating ideas, practices she utilizes with her research students as she leads them to discover ways to catalyze their potential to create original knowledge. 'Interconnection' is one of the key-words in her research, and functions not only as the method to seek ways of crossing fields, scale(s) and time(s), but also to connect the "I" with the "other" in a dialogical practice of consciousness. Published in international journals and a participant in various interdisciplinary conferences, Professor Silva is completing her first book entitled "37 Lived time tools for see(d)(k)ing (not-)knowing".

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## In(c)(v)ite: the in-Between Project

Fernando FERREIRA, Cidália FERREIRA SILVA

### Abstract

The present paper intends to present an alternative urban design methodology that explores the project as an in-between mechanism. By in-between, we assume that "the project is neither the beginning nor the ending it is just an in-between in places' time, both past and in-determinate future." (Silva 2010). It is an in-between time process that crosses several scales, actors and places.

We found the in-Between Project by searching through the existing cracks in the contemporary built environment – uncertain and abandoned places/buildings; wastelands – generated by: the increasing of a fragile global economy; the recurrent urban transformation processes (such as the over construction of road infrastructures and the cyclic destruction/construction of the old/new housing planning); the absence of activities/production; and the consequent abandonment of buildings and urban plots.

Therefore, it was acknowledged that these cracking processes are creating a catalytic effect in the built environment, causing uncertain cross-scaled consequences between time, space, and society such as: not knowing the future of these places; not expecting positive scenarios for these places; not conveying the relationships of these places and not engaging socially with these places.

Following this problematic, fundamental questions arise: how can we articulate the (dis)connections created by the existing cracks in the urban environment? How can we transform the waste inherent to these cracks into a life potential? How can we create a viable metabolism with this waste? How can we generate new activities? How can we attract new inhabitants? How can we transform cracks into magnets?

Within this research, we realised that these questions cannot be answered through the narrow design solutions formalized by the conventional object/programmatic approach, or by the top-to-bottom/bottom-to-top urban strategies, that are

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detached from the indeterminate cross time-scale relationships of these cracked places, requiring an alternative urban design approach – the in-Between project – that is structured into three-step interconnected concepts: Cite, Recite and Incite.

Cite is the first step of this design method, which invites the designer to observe, to think and to dig before acting or intervening over a specific site, reacting to the tabula-rasa approach and, embracing Jeremy Till's (2009) statement: "My sympathies lie with those who look first and then think, rather than those who think first and then look for places to impose their thinking". Cite is rooted on the "as found" attitude, developed during the 1950s by the British Independent Group, where towards the interconnection between the architects Alison and Peter Smithson, the artist Eduardo Paolozzi and the photographer Nigel Henderson, the everyday life culture was valued and the beauty of the ordinary and discarded elements was seen. Subsequently, cite is gleaning the potentialities found in the cracks of the built environment. It is to make visible "what-is-already-there" and to value the existing specific traces that coexist in the site, such as: the history and memories (ruins; remains); the earth characteristics (topography; hydrography; vegetation) and social appropriations (activities developed over these places). Cite is also to select the hidden layers and potentialities, which exist in the multiple systems of these places. Cite is to use the elements found in the place as catalysts to trigger a process. It is the starting point to create the in-Between Project for the existing cracks of the built environment.

Recite is the second step of the in-Between Project. This idea is grounded on Cedric Price's (1984) "Free space and its operational matrix", where he correlates the act of eating with the act of designing architecture, comparing the eating plate to the architecture and the supportive table to the site: "The plate as the architecture and its relationship to the supportive table as its siting enables the comparison of free-space to an operational matrix (...) the operational matrix becomes a tool for the users rather than for the designer". Price argues that if the eating plate is an open and flexible structure with distinct velocities, skilful and changed by its users' needs, the architectural design should also be considered in the same way, working as a flexible and open matrix/infrastructure, that accepts uncertain occupations. Moreover, this infrastructure can also be read as an ambivalent device that

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is both specific and indeterminate. It is specific, because is designed through citing existing potentialities of the place; and it is indeterminate, because it works as a seeding structure, a canvas that recites, accepting flexible structures or magnets, in order to catalyse uncertain programs for an unknown future.

Incite is the third step of the in-Between Project. This concept invites the designer/architect to critically imagine future possible scenarios – what if...– over the infrastructure created in the cracks of the built environment. Furthermore, incite takes Bernardo Secchi's (2001) position: "a serious and scientific basis regarding the continuous control of scenarios that can contribute to the construction of visions within which different actions and projects can simultaneously find their own legitimacy.", to reflect and argue that towards the creation of these scenarios, it is possible to anticipate an architectural design that catalyses change and prepares the place-project, in order to integrate it for social, economic and political unknown conditions. Thus, generating a flexible process that incites new opportunities. As Philip Christou (1999) refers: "The main task is one of designing catalysts for change, as pieces of landscape infrastructure."

The In-between Project is a simple practice of in(c)(v)itation. It incites the hidden potentials of cracked places and invites human beings to appropriate them in an imaginative and unforeseeable way.

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