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INTERMEDIATED- LAND-ART: THE INTERMEDIATE LANDSCAPE EXPERIENCE

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Abstract: In a mediatized era, where much of the information is accessed remotely, how can the experience of a place be understood? Tools such as Google Earth, Instagram or TripAdvisor, allow, besides the image and the physical description, the personal account of who was objectively in the space. Thus, is it possible to (co)construct a true experience of a place from a distance access? In the context of Phenomenology, focused on the understanding of experience, how is this event characterized and what role could it have for Art? It is intended to analyze how all phenomenological knowledge is constituted by learning based on direct contact and by the fictional or symbolic addition of elements, consisting as an event formed by real data and other artificial ones in an interdependent way. It is presented how the artificial data of experience, resulting from intermediation processes, participate objectively in the expansion of current concepts of landscape, proposing the terminology of Intermediated-Land-Art to refer to the artistic practice that thinks the landscape, objectively, from intermediation processes, highlighting particularly the examples that use digital platforms.

Keywords: Intermediate experience; Remote access to the territory; Contemporary landscape; Physical and Virtual; Intermediated-Land-Art.

INTRODUCTION

The article begins with a statement by the main author, being the basis of the research, which was extended to the other authors. - The admiration for several musicians and artists of Icelandic origin such as Sigur Rós, Olafur Arnalds, Jóhann Jóhannsson, Björk,

Olafur Eliasson, Olof Arnalds, among others, led me to seek to understand more about culture and about Iceland. In a search for the territory, through Google (Google PT), I came across the Fjaðrárgljúfur pass. The place (or its image) manifested itself as if it were something already known, where the imagination and the body already seemed to have been and where my painting had already gone to drink. The experience of identifying a personal connection with an unknown space spurred the question. - How can I feel an emotional connection with a place I've never been and that I didn't know?

In the search for more information about the territory, I come across news that Justin Bieber and the series Game of Thrones (HBO, from 2011 to 2019) had used the aforementioned space as a setting, and that they would have had an impact on its dynamics, especially by the increase in visitors, influenced by the series and the musician (end of statement).

Taking into account that social networks have a strong impact on promoting experiences that seem to be proposed as collective action (Tavares & Paes de Paula: 2015), where performing a certain gesture or action means participation, the territory may be affected not only by the relationship directly, but, above all, as a space for communication between community members. Remember the exponential growth in the number of Tourist Signs¹planted in different places in order to be photographed and shared on digital platforms. This sense of community, of sharing an experience or repeating an action, often overlaps with the place itself, which is why, currently, some signs are as or more attractive than the equipment or spaces where they were installed.²(Mendes: 2021, 104-105).

1 Mendes, Tatiana (2021): Tourist Signs: The literal inscription of urban furniture in the landscape. Master's Dissertation, UFJE. Juiz de Fora, Brazil

2 The Amsterdam city administration was forced to remove the I Amsterdam sign from the Rijksmuseum area, given the huge flow of tourists who flocked there to take pictures next to the sign (MENDES: 2021, 88). The Amsterdam tourist sign underlined in red the letters I and AM of the word Amsterdam (with the letters sterdam in white), highlighting the phrase I am (I am or I

Thus, the relationship established between the visitor and the place seems to be closer to a social interaction than a personal one, based on the communication with the person who will receive the images, and not so much on the relationship with the space itself.

In the case of the Icelandic gorge, the video I'll show you³ of Justin Bieber, filmed in 2015, originated a massive flow of visitors⁴ to the locations where filming took place. With regard to the Game of Thrones series, tourist circuits where episodes were recorded are available.⁵ with the places assuming two designations: the original nomenclature, usually unpronounceable for most foreign visitors, and the name associated with the series, such as Thor's waterfall or The Bloody Gate.⁶

So, attention to space can be affected by the way the message is communicated, accumulating meanings originating from the community or the issuing subject. In the case of the Fjaðrárgljúfur gorge, the Icelandic government was pressured to limit access, given the excessive number of visitors that jeopardized the preservation of the site, but, at the same time, equipped the site with equipment so that the visitor would not fail to move around and access it. However, in Bieber's video, some of the scenes report situations of improper use of the space, as they are configured as a risk of destruction of the vegetation and the place, leading some of the visitors to express (and

even carry out) the intention of repeating the envisioned experience⁷. Similar situations frequently occur in other places, leading to the destruction of spaces, injury or even death of users.⁸. In this sense: - What experience of the place is promoted to those who visit it directly and indirectly, and how can these experiences be considered in the light of phenomenology? It is interesting to understand, in particular, how the experience can be based on shared or socially stimulated data and how these affect and encourage the direct experience in the territory and, consecutively, in the definitions of landscape.

It is also interesting to try to understand how art and artists can act based on similar processes of experience carried out through interfaces, that is, in an intermediary way. Certainly, intermediation processes have been used by several artists who deal with the relationship with the landscape, such as Tacita Dean (1965), Vija Celmins (1938), Herbert Brandl (1959) or João Queiroz (1957). If Dean uses images and narratives where she will paste her own narrative dimensions, Celmins appropriates images that produce some kind of trigger in her personal memory. Brandl, with the intention of producing an expressive painting, uses images from different sources, ranging from calendars to tourist postcards, abdicating any meaning associated with the image. In the case of Queiroz, the artist starts with a journey through the territory,

In turn, other authors promoted their

am) in Amsterdam.

3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfGaX8G0f2E>(accessed on 10/18/2022)

4 Justin Bieber's video has more than 500 million views on the artist's official YouTube channel. For more information on the number of visitors to the site, see: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/blame-it-bieber-iceland-canyon-too-popular-visitors-n1007446> (accessed 18.10.2022)

5 <https://www.hostel.is/about/blog/game-of-thrones-tour-in-iceland>(accessed on 10/18/2022)

6 It must be noted, however, that, so far, I have not watched any episode of the Game of Thrones series or even seen the video or song I'll show you by Justin Bieber, nor have I had the opportunity to go to Iceland.

7 <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/blame-it-bieber-iceland-canyon-too-popular-visitors-n1007446>(accessed on 10/18/2022)

8 See the example of the waterfall areas in Serra do Gerês, in Portugal, where visitors often fall, even fatally, when trying to take photos in places that are difficult or even forbidden to access.<https://oamarens.pt/em-20-anos-houve-12-acidentes-mortais-nas-cascatas-do-geres/>(accessed on 10/18/2022)

actions in situ contact with the territory, fostering an empirical and cognitive dialogue of direct learning with the elements of space, such as Alberto Carneiro (1937-2017), Franz Krajcberg (1921-2017), Richard Long (1945), Pedro Vaz (1977) or Hamish Foulton (1946). These authors, like others in the Land Art movement, defend the phenomenon as the central axis for artistic creation related to the landscape, through direct action with the elements that make up the territory. To this extent, if in this group of authors the experience of the place is directly promoted, in the previous group it occurs via the interface, with the exception of Queiroz who promotes a process that combines both. The place assumes itself differently in each group, - conceived as real in the second group - and as - something that could be fictional, in the first group, highlighting the connection with the element that intervenes more than with the space itself -. In this situation, the experience provided is based mainly on a self-referential dialogue lived in the first person built from the interface.

When accessing through digital platforms or in the virtual environment, the existence of an intermediary element must always be considered, in an interface between the subject and the object. The condition of relationship and projection with the territory may give rise to different understandings of landscape, or the extension of its terminology.

It is interesting to understand how the intermediated experience of the place occurs and what knowledge it can bring or summon in the definitions of art related to the landscape. In turn, with the growing role of digital platforms in contact with the world, - How can artistic practices focused on the expansion of landscape terms that implement the use of these tools be designated? One of the most obvious examples is the Landscape Museum (museudapaisagem.pt), an institution

dedicated to the landscape that exists mainly as a digital space. For example, the practice of some artists such as Martinho Costa (1977) or Nuno Ferreira (1994), who resort to digital platforms to develop their approximations to the territory.

Considering the hypothesis that all knowledge based on experience is made up of real data and other artificial ones, the aim is to evaluate the possibility of thinking about an indirect, but equally physiological relationship with the territory, in a process of co-construction of a physical experience and sensory with the place. If the artistic movement of Land Art⁹ assumed the direct relationship as a form of symbiosis and learning of the territory, where the experience of *Ser e Estar* were confirmed as essential for the success of the interaction, and starting from the premises that guided this movement, an attempt is made to understand how the relationship with the territory when in experience there is the presence of an interface. The term Intermediated-Land-Art is proposed as a designation that assumes the interaction proposal of the Land Art movement, but replaces direct contact with intermediary through interfaces.

THE LANDSCAPE AS INTERMEDIATION

The values that shaped our consumerist culture led us to a "commodification" of the landscape; without a doubt, the landscape is not a thing, it is not a large object or a set of objects configured by nature or transformed by human action. The landscape is not nature or even the physical environment that surrounds us or on which we are located. The landscape is a construction, a mental elaboration that men carry out through the phenomena of culture.(Maderuelo: 2005, 17)

The landscape is a human thing and results from the interplay with the surroundings,

9 About Land Art, it is proposed: Lailach, M. (2007): Land Art; Wallis, B.; Krastner, J. (1998): Land and Environmental Art

constituting itself both as a concept and as an experience. It is a process of interaction and transmission of a certain space-time, by an observer - and reporter, being the object of the message and existing in the sensorial and communication dimension. It exists as a condition of thought also originating in culture, although it is often formulated and recognized by the body. It is in art, and in particular in painting¹⁰, that the terminology develops, due to the need to characterize the dialogue that the artists took with the space and time in which they are inscribed. In turn, the place is associated with the territory, abdicating what could inscribe the physical, symbolic and emotional characteristics associated with the interaction with the space. The place is a thing with coordinates that exists beyond what can inhabit it, like Nature or outer space, anywhere in the Universe. Maderuelo also mentions that the colloquial and everyday use of the word landscape resulted in an abusive extension of the term, which amplifies multiple meanings and conceptual expansion, distorting its original meaning and content (Maderuelo: 2005, 15). This usage not only refers to the way in which the meaning is subverted, but above all, to the extension of a use that is projected in the analysis to a historical time when the term did not even exist. For the author, the creation of the term occurs in the 17th century, and any prior attribution of its use is pure speculation (Maderuelo: 2005, 16-17). However, the definition will be associated with previous terminologies and in different contexts, highlighting the Greek notions of Topography, related to the description of the real place, and Topotesia, related to the fictional space. (Maderuelo: 2005, 18-19). related to the description of the real place, and Topotesia, related to the fictional space. (Maderuelo: 2005, 18-19). related to the description of the real place, and Topotesia,

10 See Maderuelo, J. (2005). *The landscape: genesis of a concept*, Abada, Madrid

11 See 'The Alps' (1911) and 'Philosophy of Landscape' (1913) by Georg Simmel

related to the fictional space. (Maderuelo: 2005, 18-19).

From this circumstance arises the argument identified by Maderuelo for the landscape to be appropriated by other areas of knowledge that needed to talk about the place, seeking to find an expression that would allow them to communicate the territory, objectifying it. The landscape, colloquially, starts to assume itself as a designation of the territory, in which it takes control of Nature and of the visual and symbolic elements of the territory.

According to Terán 'what is real on the surface of the earth is not the shape of the relief, the climatic characteristics that occur there, its vegetal cover and everything that human eagerness seeks, what is real is its bond' (Terán in Maderuelo (2005: 33) The bond that converts territorial phenomena into landscape cannot be physical, and it is necessary to seek the classification of landscape in a relationship beyond what the territory offers us, beyond its physical union (2005, 34).

'the landscape, as an idea that represents the physical environment, is the other, something that is outside of us and surrounds us, but that, as a cultural concept, is something that directly concerns the subject, since there is no landscape without interpretation'. (Maderuelo: 2005, 36)

The author resorts to the poetry of South Korean Kim Sa-Kat, who identifies the 'mysterious' as what is associated with the place to define the concept of landscape. The mysterious is the element associated with the 'other', which enhances the relationship with the place and the search for symbolic translation, through the codification of the landscape. (2005, 35)

Already in the proposal of Georg Simmel de *Stimmung*¹¹, the landscape is formulated in 'three inseparable aspects: the unique

conformation of the parts that endows each landscape with an individual character; the conjunction of the subject's soul traits in a peculiar disposition or nature; and, finally, the fusion of both – the objective and subjective aspects – in a single tonality or atmosphere' (Serrão: 2011, 40). The term *Stimmung*, of Germanic origin, is difficult to translate into Portuguese, with the words *tone* (Serrão: 2011, 40) and *atmosphere* (Serrão: 2011, 40 and Dugos: 2013, 24) being used, focusing on the feeling of harmony (Dugos: 2013, 30) which comprises the interaction between the subject and the territory, both physically and mentally.

Both the mysterious and the *Stimmung* are confirmed as sensorial and symbolic processes of the subject that interacts with the place. For this reason, the landscape is related to notions of phenomenology and meaning, associated with the relationship and not so much with the place, manifesting itself both in the eastern philosophical conception, as in the aesthetic determination of the west. The landscape is more about Being and Being than about Where. This way, the phenomenological dimension assumes itself as central in the way of summoning the definition and characterization of the landscape, in which it is in the experience that the landscape is formulated, as a space-time relationship of Being and Being. Several authors in different temporal and geographic periods concentrated on this dimension for the characterization of landscape, such as Alberto Carneiro, Richard Long, Claude Monet, Hamish Fulton or Georg Simmel.

At the same time, as a symbolic construction, the landscape inscribes dimensions arising from the culture itself, the result of learning and coexistence. Therefore, the landscape inscribes data related to the link with the physical, but also with the imagined, in the combination of dimensions originating in the

Greek rhetoric of topography and topotesy, from which we highlight the concept related to the fictitious place. Thus, the landscape manifests itself as a process of intermediation, where the real and the fictitious act, where the empirical and the cognitive participate, where the physical and symbolic complement each other.

INTERMEDIATION AND EXPERIENCE

When heading towards... and learning, the pre-sence does not leave an internal sphere in which it was previously encapsulated. In its original way of being, pre-sence is always already outside, next to an entity that comes to meet it in the already discovered world. And the decisive stopping at the entity to be known is not a kind of abandonment of the internal sphere. No way. In this being outside, next to the object, the presence is inside, in a sense that must be understood correctly, that is, it is itself that, as a being-in-the-world, it knows.(Heidegger: 2005, 101)

'Phenomenology is a description of the specific structure of the phenomenon (immanent flow of experiences that constitutes consciousness) (...), as a condition for the possibility of knowledge' (Ziles: 2007, 218). This studies the 'phenomenon' that is produced in the relationship between the subject and the object, when analyzed by consciousness (Husserl: 2006). The subject is understood as the living being, and the object, the element with which it interacts. Generally speaking, phenomenology examines the way in which knowledge of phenomena takes place and, despite being deeply empiricist, it is not limited to knowledge originating from experience, but to the process in which all learning is converted from the relations between the subject and the object. For Heidegger, the process of receiving the object involves finding in the external something that is also of the internal sphere.

If phenomenology focuses on the relationship between the object and the subject, and on the way the latter reviews and projects itself, at the same time it does not only refer to the present time of interrelationship, but above all to an expanded time where the Being asserts itself. It is assumed that although the spatiotemporal event has a defined time, the result occurs in a temporal extension, being able to project both into the future and act on the past. The action of consciousness (of understanding or misunderstanding) of the phenomenon encourages the expansion of time, but also presupposes the existence of previous data on which consciousness will support itself. Learning influences and determines reflection, in which awareness is affected by pre-existing information, both real and fictional.

If the direct phenomenon will be central as an object of study by Phenomenology, it is important to point out that some of the agents that act in the experience result from processing and previous learning. To this extent, culture, personal experience, trauma, are some of the agents that will participate in the event, and above all, in the awareness that can be generated.

In the illusion of the phantom limb, Merleau-Ponty (1939 in Cardim: 2007, 23-32), argues that the absence of a limb due to amputation does not destroy its existence for the body, since some people feel its presence after the removal. If the missing member still produces physiological sensations, it means that the body receives its stimuli more comprehensively than through direct contact. 'It is a latent knowledge that consists of the experience of an ancient present that did not decide to become truly past, but remains almost present' (Cardim: 2007, p.25). Latent knowledge presupposes prior knowledge, the result of previous contact with similar situations. The physiological response reflects

this knowledge intuitively, at least for some period of time.

Thus, the experience produced through a coding or learning process can have the same impact as a direct experience. See the example of the virtual, either Virtual Reality or Mixed Reality, which seek to affect the subject's sensory stimuli. In this framework, Breuer (2020) proposes the virtual as possible in Merleau-Ponty's proposal, as we are able to identify phenomena from non-real or absent objects, since we feel them as real.

Thus, the relationship between the physical and the virtual, and even between the object and the representation of the object, may result in a similar physiological response, based on knowledge formulated from previous situations. The phenomenological condition will be present in the relationship between the subject and the object, both physical and virtual, but the circumstances may differ. The body is the figure that experiences (Merleau-Ponty: 1945), a state prior to cogito and interpretation. The phenomenological condition moves away from the Cartesian condition originating in thought, to focus on knowledge from the body (Cardim: 2007, 18-20). To this extent, all knowledge results from thinking about the relationship that the body establishes with the object, with the world, being that it is also an object recognized by consciousness (Cardim: 2007, 186). Now, if the phenomenon is the way in which the physiological world is converted into perception, via consciousness, we can question whether the empirical dimension will be divergent when originating directly from the real object or from a representation of it. As Schweibenz (2019, 18) points out, everything can be converted into content, which places physical and virtual in similar molds as an object and, as such, in all experience there is intermediation and vice versa.

ARTISTIC PRACTICES BASED ON INTERMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

The term Intermediated Experience (Loureiro & Santos: 2023) presents itself as an objective representation of a phenomenon where, between subject and object, there is an interface. 'The object will not be the interface, but the content shared through it. The intermediated experience refers to the phenomenon in the relationship between the subject and the content, recognizing the existence of the mediating element'. (Loureiro & Santos: 2023)

It is interesting to understand how some artists have used intermediation processes in their authorial practices associated with the landscape, understanding the extent of these relationships, which resources are used and how they operate in the implementation of their artistic practices.

The works of Vija Celmins (1938) represent territories such as the sea, the desert, outer space, but also the soil of the Moon or Mars. Her drawings and paintings, characterized by mimesis, are mostly made from photography and represent instant situations or constantly changing elements, such as water, clouds, or places that are impossible to access. Celmins seeks to 'obsessively redescribe the world in order to understand human consciousness relative to direct experience' (Garrels: 2018). Sheena Wagstaff says 'Celmins brings a new and powerful resonance to the way we understand through art the nature of our environment and our changing relationship with the world'.¹²

The artist refers¹³ that he 'looked for images where he found some kind of relation to his memory of the war', and that painting served as a process to 'tame an external image that referred to the interior'. Celmins is interested in the idea of 'verisimilitude'¹⁴ where the

12 <https://www.metmuseum.org/press/exhibitions/2019/vija-celmins#>

13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K99EVM-EG0&t=67s>(accessed on 06.11.2022)

14 <https://www.metmuseum.org/press/exhibitions/2019/vija-celmins#>

image comes so close to something visual that it overlaps or replaces the original figure. In *To Fix the Image in Memory I–XI* (1977–83), the artist used 11 stones she had collected from the deserts of Arizona and New Mexico, replicating them in bronze. Later, she carried out a series of drawings and paintings in which she reproduced the cast stones, making it impossible to distinguish whether the models are the original stones or bronze copies, creating an overlap between artificial and real worlds.

Vija Celmins, who began his career looking in external images for projections of his own memory of the war, developed a process of rediscovering his personal world through images that had already been produced. The intersection between real and artificial, which occurs when drawing or painting, calls for an approach that transcends the reproduction of the image, in an objective and subjective dialogue with memory and time. This way, Celmins' works are simultaneously appropriation and projection, where the first is fostered and stimulates (pe'l) the second, in an overlapping dimension between artificial and real where the limits are impossible to be traced.

Like Celmins, Tacita Dean (1965), collects images with which she develops some kind of affective relationship. The artist uses archives of documents, images and objects, associating them with a narrative dimension - which distances her from Celmins -. For Dean, the image summons a dialogue, in a reflection on the existence described in the narrative as something personal, in the visual and temporal crossing of the realities proposed by the narrative and by the experience itself throughout the creative process. The image is a source of both historical and current information. In *Teignmouth Electron* and

Disappearance at the sea, from 2000, the artist revisits the story of Donald Crowhurst, a navigator deluded by the desire to assert himself. Crowhurst, participates in 1968, in a challenge launched by the Sunday Times - a race to circumnavigate the planet -, on a trimaran he built with support from the community where he lived, Teignmouth. When on the voyage, he realizes the impossibility of overcoming the adversities at sea, he chooses to keep a fictional account of the continuation of the voyage, remaining hidden in the South Atlantic, until the real voyage corresponded to passing through the point where he was. When, in June 1969, the coordinates of the fictitious journey intersect with those of his real position, the navigator is again contactable and realizes that he is ahead of the race (Rodrigues: 2016, 30-33). On the return trip to England, his boat ends up sinking, with the disappearance of Donald. Dean develops a research into the history and imagination of Crowhurst, reconstructing the steps of his journey and the vessel, which, later, after some improvements, would have been the fastest vessel among the participants in the challenge (Rodrigues: 2016, 38). The crossing between the fictional and the real in the navigator's story, originate a narrative that the author will pursue, developing another approach that intersects with her personal experience. The pursuit of the vessel took her to the island of Cayman Brac, in Jamaica, where the boat, after different uses, was destroyed by a storm, now lying among the vegetation.

However, 'in Dean's work, the image does not seek to save appearances, it is not said by resemblance, but rather by difference. His works do not literally describe the history of Crowhurst, but extend his gesture into another

time and another space' (Rodrigues: 2016, 40). Dean departs from Donald's narrative to become involved in a personal journey, guided by fictional and real descriptions by both Crowhurst and JG Ballard, in a complex network of overlaps and imaginaries. Thus, the montage or collage process that has been frequent in her artistic practice, summons all real and artificial narrative dimensions, apprehended and projected by the author herself, in a timeless and timeless mix, where everything intersects in the elaboration of a different reality.

Another process of intermediation is presented in *Orogénesis – Landscapes without memory*¹⁵, by Joan Fontcuberta (1955), digitally realized images of uninhabited territories with visual characteristics associated with the descriptions proposed by Romanticism. Landscapes are built using Terragen software, a scenario generator developed by Planetside Software. The software allows the creation of 3D digital scenarios from maps. However, this software is also used in the military context allowing to reproduce real scenarios, where the military will act. In the case of the air force, the program is used to familiarize pilots with the terrain where they will carry out attacks, in order to master the real space, training in simulators in digital scenarios. However, the maps that Fontcuberta uses are paintings by Art History artists, such as Derain, Van Gogh¹⁶ or Friedrich¹⁷, transformed by the software and which maintain the relationship with the original image, through the title. Thus, the nature that technology makes available to us is both the form of an impossibility and the basis for destruction, where an apparent calm and silence is suddenly confronted with the idea of destruction associated with its use (Loureiro: 2016, 117). *Orogénesis*, a title that

15 To learn more about this project, see Kay Watson's article in the London Photography Diary: Watson, Kay: Visual Analysis: *Orogénesis*, 2015 <http://london-photography-diary.com/visual-analysis-orogenesis-by-kay-watson/> query on 7/15/2015

16 *Orogénesis*: Van Gogh, 2003 (Vincent Van Gogh: *Starry Night*, 1889)

17 *Orogénesis*: Friedrich, 2002 (Caspar David Friedrich: *The Wanderer on a Sea of Clouds*, 1818)

refers to the 'Book of Genesis' or 'Creation', is symbolically the origin and the end. Images of an uninhabited paradise, globally idealized, cover up the terrifying scene of truth, in a continuous game in which surprise is constant.

In Celmins, Dean and Fontcuberta we find three examples of artistic practices linked to the landscape developed from processes of intermediation. However, in the case of Celmins and Dean, it is the personal dimension that is assumed as the primordial axis for the journey, while Fontcuberta develops a transversal dialogue with the history of art and the aesthetic and political dimensions of civilization. That is, if in the case of the Spanish artist, a transverse dialogue is important, in the case of Vija Celmins and Tacita Dean, it is the personal discovery that enhances the development of the journey. In none of the examples does one seem to intuit a concern with the physical place, even if this seems to exist in Celmins. Dean seeks to rebuild the narrative by filtering it in his own dimension of experience.

THE JOURNEY THROUGH DIGITAL TERRITORY



Fig. 1. Martinho Costa, Fontainebleau, oil on mdf, 180x386cm, 2011 (18 modules), 2011

FONTAINEBLEU PROJECT, 2011 - MARTINHO COSTA¹⁸

In the quest to get closer to the Naturalist painters of the Barbizon School, who

¹⁸ <http://projectofontainebleu.blogspot.com/>

gathered throughout the 19th century to paint in the woods of Fontainebleau - such as Millet, Rousseau, Corot -, Martinho Costa begins a journey through space through Google Earth and Google Maps searching for the exact location where the painting *Le Pavé de Chailly Fontainebleau* (1865, Musée d'Orsay, Paris/France), by Claude Monet, was made. Costa used the application's 'Street View' tool, allowing himself to walk through the forest, following the roads that cross it. The author registers the view of the forest space - now with signage and tarred roads - through the images provided by the platform, assuming the moment when he made the trip to this place, in 2011. Martinho visits the space from a distance and live - as if it were a streaming transmission -, but viewing different images captured by the application's cameras. Thus, he paints a deferred triple: the place where Monet was in 1865; the time when the images were captured by the company Google; and the moment when the image was painted - now frozen in a painting in polyptych format, with 18 elements, each one done separately. Simultaneously, he assumes the deferred location - in a paradox with the movement of artists who traveled to Fontainebleau - remotely accessing the place, in the comfort of his studio, through his computer, while questioning us about the possibility of understanding the territory in association with landscape movements of the 19th century, from the point of view of the 21st century. - What aesthetic and phenomenological dimensions differ between the impressionist movement - which reacts and appropriates the technological innovations of photography -, and the current moment - where technology allows us to travel to distant territories, without leaving the place -? Martinho Costa summons the impact of technological transformations in each of the historical periods, evidencing

thinking about the territory and the relationship that the subject can develop with it. Simultaneously, it seeks to question the place of experience in landscape definitions - assuming that technology not only participates in its meaning, but also expands the possibilities of interaction with the territory - and, consecutively, broadens the scope of experiences with the territory and the notion of landscape - with the inscription of the virtual as an interface with the territory -.

MUSEUM OF THE LANDSCAPE (MUSEUDAPAISAGEM.PT)

The Landscape Museum project (MdP) is a virtual institution that does not exist as a projection of a physical museum institution. The MdP assumes the conceptual broadening of the museum definition “that escapes a watertight standardization to embrace an encompassing idea linked to issues of symbolic and collective heritage” (Abreu, Centeno, Pina, Rodrigues, Carvalho & Rodrigues: 2018, 161). For the authors “museums are organizations in permanent evolution, which reinvent themselves and change their relationship with society, with the territory and with the collections, not allowing the concept or definition of museum to be closed” (Abreu et al, 2018, 161). The museum “became a place of discovery, discussion and confrontation of ideas, a forum and laboratory, moving away from the initial concept of a temple, dedicated only to contemplation” (Abreu et al.: 2018, 161). The relationship between the museum and the cultural public space is transformed with greater interactivity between the institution, the user and the social and cultural fabric.

However, the musealization of the landscape raises other questions, taking into

account that the notions of heritage, culture and landscape intersect, and may give rise to different conceptions. However, the MdP does not address any specific landscape, but the relationship between the community and the territory, which encompasses the landscape in general, not having any collection or physical building. “Its focus is the landscape and the landscape is not enclosed or physically incorporated in a museum” (Abreu et al., 2018, 167). The MdP aims to “create enriching, participatory and transmedia experiences that lead the public to immerse themselves in the online platform and to ‘travel’ from there to the landscapes that surround it” (Abreu et al., 2018, 173). The curatorial conception calls for an “immaterial dimension” that “emphasizes the conceptual and procedural dimension”, but “attentive to the material dimensions”.

In the exhibition *Sounds and materials from the landscape*¹⁹, coordinated by João Gomes de Abreu, curated by Margarida Carvalho, with photographs by Duarte Belo and sound recording by Magnus Robb, which is part of the virtual collection of the Landscape Museum, there is a sequence of photographs of different locations in the Tagus watershed, accompanied by the sounds of birds that inhabit each place. An exhibition where “these songs of Tagus birds (...) are thus the connecting thread of a sensorial territory composed of fragmentary sound and visual landscapes”.²⁰ If in the previous example, the exhibition is organized to be accessed on the platform, in *Pedreira da Cabeça Gorda*²¹, with photography by Joana Gregório and João Gomes de Abreu and text by Maria Manuel Pedrosa, an immersion in real space is proposed, the result of an inventory process and challenge available to museum visitors. Here, the proposal is presented as an interface that challenges the experience with the real

19 <https://museudapaisagem.pt/expos/detail/2>

20 Carvalho, M. (exhibition presentation text)<https://museudapaisagem.pt/expos/detail/2>(accessed on 5/25/2022)

21 <https://museudapaisagem.pt/pontos/detail/52>

that “provides unique experiences of reflection and interaction with the landscape”²²

This curatorial approach, which reflects on the immaterial and material dimensions involved in the Landscape Museum, is in full harmony with the very idea of landscape, simultaneously diffuse and tangible, mobilizing an experience of the place that involves the lived, felt and represented interaction. of the subject with the territory. (Abreu et al.: 2018, 173)

The MdP presents itself as a museum that absorbs the tools available through the virtual world and simultaneously uses them to promote interaction, whether with immaterial or material content, in a continuous interface. In turn, it continues the expansion of museum terminology, assuming the transformations of the role and functionality of these institutions, taking advantage of the development of interfaces and digital to assert itself as a Virtual Museum.

INTERMEDIATED-LAND-ART

In the examples presented, it is understood how digital and virtual tools can be integrated into a dialogue with the territory and how these seem to induce new modes of interaction and experience and, predictably, gauge the need for adjustment or expansion of landscape notions.

The tools made available by digital platforms, which are associated with the clear improvement of communication networks and equipment - especially the mobile phone -, allows us to infer that the transformations in the way we access and interact with the territory deeply involve the presence of these tools. With the advancement of technology, which not only becomes more accessible from an economic and implementation point of view, but also becomes more intuitive from the user's point of view, its use becomes more diluted in everyday life. Equipment and applications with geolocation are implemented in such a

²² <https://museudapaisagem.pt/pontos/>

way that we rarely realize how they interfere in our day-to-day life - from constantly updated information on traffic conditions and means of mobility, to ordering products and food, or finding partners for love relationships - where mapping tools have a very significant impact on movement in physical space. While these settle in and participate in the real flow, they evoke a sense of trust and familiarity, making them diffuse and necessary in our practices. Notice the choice of a place for a meal or food, where the suggestion built based on the experience of other users tells us what to choose. -If we choose to sleep in a place - based on the suggestion of strangers -, or meet a stranger for the purpose of a love relationship - guided by the suggestions of an application -, to what extent the relationship with the territory is affected and how the artistic practice associated with the landscape can undergo transformations? where mapping tools have a very significant impact on movement in physical space. While these settle in and participate in the real flow, they evoke a sense of trust and familiarity, making them diffuse and necessary in our practices. Notice the choice of a place for a meal or food, where the suggestion built

based on the experience of other users tells us what to choose. -If we choose to sleep in a place - based on the suggestion of strangers -, or meet a stranger for the purpose of a love relationship - guided by the suggestions of an application -, to what extent the relationship with the territory is affected and how the artistic practice associated with the landscape can undergo transformations? they summon a feeling of trust and familiarity, making them diffuse and necessary in our practices. Notice the choice of a place for a meal or food, where the suggestion built based on the experience of other users tells us what to choose. -If we choose to sleep in a place - based on the suggestion of strangers -, or meet a stranger for the purpose of a love relationship - guided by the suggestions of an application -, to what extent the relationship with the territory is affected and how the artistic practice associated with the landscape can undergo transformations? they summon a feeling of trust and familiarity, making them diffuse and necessary in our practices. Notice the choice of a place for a meal or food, where the suggestion built based on the experience of other users tells us what to choose. -If we choose to sleep in a place - based on the suggestion of strangers -, or meet a stranger for the purpose of a love relationship - guided by the suggestions of an application -, to what extent the relationship with the territory is affected and how the artistic practice associated with the landscape can undergo transformations?

The proposal we put forward is that the participation of interfaces in the relationship with the territory and the artistic practice that arises from it will have to be named. We propose the notion of Intermediated-Land-Art, which designates artistic practice directed towards contact with territory, presupposing the intermediated existence of an interface. It also presupposes the intention of direct experience, assuming that the presence of

the interface may be diluted or invisible in the experience itself. It proposes, finally, the intention of approaching the territory, in the search for knowledge and/or symbiotic processes, such as those that characterize the notions of landscape. It can also consider some issues of conceptual nature, developed from the concerns that guide/guide Land Art artists, although they are not watertight.

The notion of Intermediated-Land-Art intends to incorporate the group of artists and practices associated with landscape that describe how the human relationship with technology has become an increasingly systematic and normalized process, where the boundaries between real and artificial are blurred. The artificial is the tool - both the equipment and the technology - but also the way in which information is constructed - from the cultural participation of the others. Thus, Intermediated-Land-Art does not intend to substitute other artistic movements or to house processes that were not thought of in this context, such as the examples of Dean, Celmins or Fontcuberta, but to introduce in the definitions of landscape a paradigm that has been increasingly present in our daily lives and in the way artistic practice unfolds. Art and artists thus have the possibility to ponder and review how their actions are inscribed in the relationship between landscape and the interface, but also in the perception how the artificial can extend empirical learning and the phenomenological dimension.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The circumstances brought about by the development of communication networks and technologies, which are largely participatory in our daily lives, call for the overlap between the real and the symbolic, in a forceful way. The physical space is today, more than ever, a hybrid space of data and physical elements, participated by the knowledge we build of the

territory directly and through the use of data made available by platforms and other users. Wandering in real space changes according to the data that reach us, redefining the relationship with physical space. In turn, with the constant growth of information about the place, it is mandatory to identify that the notion of place must be reconstructed, converting it into a notion of virtual or even artificial. In turn, the experience produced with the place is directly affected by the symbolic, making it necessary to reformulate the notion of landscape. If the space is co-constructed, your experience will be built through an interface, in an intermediary way. The intermediated experience, based on concrete data on the use of the place, provides a possible relationship with space and with what it can summon, redefining the notion of landscape, without invalidating the way in which phenomenology characterizes it in direct experiences with the environment. place. The landscape, based on intermediation processes, is directed towards the place and what our experience can learn from it, assuming that the place is a co-construction via interfaces. in an intermediary way. The intermediated experience, based on concrete data on the use of the place, provides a possible relationship with space and with what it can summon, redefining the notion of landscape, without invalidating the way in which phenomenology characterizes it in direct experiences with the environment. place. The landscape, based on intermediation processes, is directed towards the place and what our experience can learn from it, assuming that the place is a co-construction via interfaces. in an intermediary way. The intermediated experience, based on concrete data on the use of the place, provides a possible relationship with space and with what it can summon, redefining the notion of landscape, without invalidating the way in which phenomenology characterizes it in direct

experiences with the environment. place. The landscape, based on intermediation processes, is directed towards the place and what our experience can learn from it, assuming that the place is a co-construction via interfaces.

If in artistic practice we find examples of authors, such as Dean or Celmins, who resort to descriptions or images of territories and places to define their own landscapes, promoting an intermediated dialogue with the territory, at the same time, they seek to summon their own memory - in Celmins - and the transcendent and utopian.

The facilitated access via technology and information software about the space, has led to the immersion of these processes in everyday life, as tools for mobility, suggestion and even romantic involvement. In this context, the distance journey to a territory allows the contemplation of the use of these tools as promoters of practices and reflection on the territory - Landscape Museum -, as well as the development of long-distance interactions with the territory - Martinho Costa -.

Directing artistic practices towards the territory, calling upon the notion of Land Art, allows us to propose that space, even physical space, becomes a hybrid between real information and artificial or symbolic information, making it necessary to consider the nomenclature of these interventions. Thus, the relationship with the real physical territory, based on interfaces, occurs as an intermediated experience with the place and, as such, inscribes intermediation as possible in the phenomenological definition of landscape. The notion of Intermediated-Land-Art is proposed, as a designation for the set of practices associated with artistic practice carried out in contact with the territory, assuming access to it through intermediary means. The term intends not only to evaluate how our relationship with the

territory is under the influence of technology and data, but, inscribe how some artistic actions must be rethought through this prism. Simultaneously, it invokes the meaning of phenomenon, assuming that much of the information that participates in the definition of phenomenology is of a symbolic or artificial nature.

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