

# Social arts and collaboration

## EDITORS

Paula Reaes Pinto  
António Gorgel Pinto  
Sérgio Vicente

Since the *tekhnè* concept in Ancient Greece, which at the time represented the notions of art and technique that served as the roots for the evolution of art disciplines, the idea of a holistic territory of practice has emerged. Later on, gaps between the different territories of art started to open, which, although permitting the development of more specific knowledge, inhibited other forms of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary art practices.

In the early 1990s, Galeev (1991) developed an open system to incorporate artistic practices based on new techniques and technologies. The goal was to show how the existing art forms are organised and interrelated according to their positions within a culture of art. Galeev's system is divided into four reference points where the different practices, more or less hybrid, can be placed, namely the visual arts, the audio arts, the figurative arts, and the non-figurative arts.

Regarding the different practices presented in the Cross Media Arts – Social Arts and Collaboration book, the question is how the social arts can be placed in a culture of art, particularly the practices involving different types of collaboration. It is also significant to understand social art practices more concretely. All art practices use a particular medium that can vary according to reference points such as those mentioned above, having in common the relation to a social context to a variable degree, which can be more based on representation and reproduction or more on socially engagement and activism.

Besides the comprehensive understanding of the social arts within the arts' systematisation, another characteristic is their critical approach. According to Rancière (2006), critical art is a territory placed between art and politics aiming to raise the observers' awareness of the existence of 'mechanisms of domination' and transform them into conscious actors within society. The relationship between aesthetics and politics

is common ground in all social art practices, focusing on shaping the consciousness of observers, listeners, and users of objects and on the experiences developed by creative agents in this broad sphere.

The different collaborative social art practices presented in this book have some level of social action and citizenship no matter what artistic territory they fall under. Through the work of different creatives and collectives, there is a common thread that establishes a meaningful understanding of a specific kind of knowledge and sensitivity. Coming from various art fields, be they performative, visual, or project-based, the authors share practices and ways of collaborating for the public good that can represent new directions when understood from different perspectives.

Also significant is encouraging a holistic understanding of the arts, a discussion related to a praxis crossing the boundaries between art fields and other areas of know-how. Exploring the intersection of knowledge and methodologies, we hope to explore alternative forms of representation and social intervention, namely a collaboration model between creatives, makers, stakeholders, and communities that promote social and cultural cohesion through concrete actions with citizens.

The book is divided into four sections. The first one, titled *Social Arts and Collaboration*, is introduced by Alastair Fuad-Luke. This section has the contributions by invited authors: Paulo Lameiro, from SAMP; Paula Miranda and Tiago Mota Saraiva, from Working with the 99%, and ateliermob; Vera Fritsche, from S27 - Art and Education; and Kate Adams, from Project Art Works. This is followed by the last three sections, *Narratives, Identities, and Geographies*, where selected authors present their artistic research projects. We thank all these contributors for sharing their experiences and research in the production of knowledge.

## REFERENCES

Galeyev, B. M., 1991. The New 'Laokoon': A Periodic System of the Arts. *Leonardo*, 24(4), 453–456.

Rancière, J., 2006. Problems and transformations in critical art. In Bishop, C. (Ed.), *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art* (pp. 83–93). Whitechapel: The Mit Press.