



From the Museum-Temple to the Museum-Interface: A Case Study of the Virtual Museum Paço Das Artes

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Abstract. The debate about the relationship between museum, exhibition and technology, as well as about the changes in the museum's operation, aiming a more effective engagement of the visiting public, is not recent. The *Crystal Palace*, a gigantic construction of iron and glass built in London, England, to host the Grand Exhibition of 1851, could be a starting point to the debates related to the modifications caused by the technology in the museum scope. It is interesting to approach the role of the museum from the closed and neutral space image contained in the expression "White Cube". On his essay "Inside the White Cube", published in the magazine *Artforum* in 1976, the artist Brian O'Doherty makes a strong critic to the modernist exhibition space, as it was instated for the Museum of Modern Art of New York, in the first half of the 20th century. Introspective and self-referential, the white cube is a space-temple, a sacred, aseptic and timeless place, remote from the reality of the world. It is exactly this asepsis and introspection that will be discussed by the contemporary museums that seek – using different strategies – to make the public experience increasingly attractive with the museum equipment. Digital museums, virtual museums, augmented reality, as well as social media, are some of the strategies that can be found nowadays. Finally, the project Virtual Museum Paço das Artes will be presented, a project being developed in the city of São Paulo, Brazil, product from a partnership among Paço das Artes, equipment from Estate's Secretary of Culture of São Paulo and the University Anhembi Morumbi.

Keywords: Digital museum · Museum-interface · Paço das Artes

1 Introduction

Transformations over this last century brought along deep changes in the field of culture and in public cultural policies. What can be perceived, in the specific case of Brazil, weakens the role of the state in the defense of cultural democratization, understood here not only as access to culture, but also as embracing of cultural diversity. However, we often identify a dismantling of the area of culture, especially in times of economic crisis, since it is generally considered by the state as a less important field when compared to others.

Reflecting on the role of the museum within this context, taking into account that culture is a constitutional right (in the case of Brazil, implemented by the Citizen Constitution of 1988), is therefore extremely necessary.

The questioning of the institutional role is accompanied, especially in regard to the public sphere, by the perception of a mismatch between institutional practices—which are often directed exclusively at the development of spectacular proposals—and actions that can establish an effective dialogue and participation with the diversity of the public and the social space.

What is generally perceived is the development of contents unrelated to the heterogeneous subjectivities and to the different social classes that permeate the social sphere. Often, the roster of institutional actions hides a discourse that replicates existing models without genuinely proposing more expansive and cross-cutting alternatives.

In this context, two questions must be asked:

1. What are the possible strategies of museums today, especially considering spaces, such as Paço das Artes, with small budgets and which stand outside the great hegemonic centers of art production and circulation?
2. What is the place of art institutions that propose more experimental strategies, different from those produced by spaces aimed at the diffusion of spectacular proposals?

2 What Is the Contemporary?

Without intending to exhaust the subject, I would like to start with the essay *What is the contemporary?*, by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, written for the inaugural class of his Philosophy course, taught from 2006 to 2007 at the School of Art and Design, in Venice.

One of the first topics of this essay is the notion of untimely, developed by Nietzsche in his text *The Birth of Tragedy*. The contemporary, in this first perspective, is that which creates a mismatch, a disconnection in relation to its time. According to Agamben: “Those who coincide too well with the epoch, those who are perfectly tied to it in every respect, are not contemporaries, precisely because they do not manage to see it,” says Agamben et al. (2009, p. 4).

We are interested, however, in the second meaning established by Agamben, who arrives at the definition of the contemporary as “he who firmly holds his gaze on his own time so as to perceive not its light, but rather its darkness” (2002, XIX). Thus, in the philosopher’s definition, all times are, for those who experience contemporaneity, obscure.

But the dark does not represent here a privative concept; the simple absence of light, a non-vision, that is, something that would signal some form of inactivity or passivity of vision—on the contrary. Taking as a principle the notion from neurophysiology about the activities of the OFF cells—certain peripheral vision cells that come into activity by the absence of light—the author invites us to act in the dark. Agamben states:

[...] the contemporary is the person who perceives the darkness of his time as something that concerns him, as something that never ceases to engage him. Darkness is something that—more than any light—turns directly and singularly toward him. The contemporary is the one whose eyes are struck by the beam of darkness that comes from his own time.

Like the stars and galaxies, that project their light without ever reaching us, the contemporary continually escapes our grasp. Thus it is precisely through the recognition of the split with the time in which we are that we have the possibility of understanding what the contemporary is.

If the experience of contemporaneity requires, as Agamben says, courage to see in the dark, we might ask ourselves: What would it mean to be “contemporary” in the current context, taking into account museum strategies?

3 Decolonization of Museums: Collection and Power

This question has already been asked by a number of thinkers and theorists. Not surprisingly, we find the publication *On the Museum’s Ruins*, appearing in the early 1990s, in which the American thinker Douglas Crimp declares the death of art institutions and, more specifically, of museums.

Establishing a dialogue with Hans Belting and Artur Danto, Crimp calls into question the modernist view of the museum or, more precisely, of a certain museological belief of representing art as a homogeneous system, supposedly universal, and art history as its ideal classification.

In part, this supposed universality was unmasked, either by the existence of cultures that are far from being identified as being part of the Euro-Western model, or because the traditional way of narrating history, through styles and characteristics that develop linearly, failed to encompass the plurality of artistic productions that emerged after the modernism in the field of the arts.

Not surprisingly, we have seen a series of discussions—whether in the field of the narrative of art history or in the actions of the museum field—that defend the process of decolonization of museums and the need to liberate the collections from the Euro-Western imperial and hegemonic perspective. Javier Rezzano, coordinator of Uruguay’s National Museums System, for example, in a lecture at the 8th Ibero-American Museum Meeting (Lisbon, October 13–15, 2014), understands the term decolonization in a broad sense. Decolonizing, for him, meant necessarily making the museum more inclusive, bringing it closer to the community it serves.

Boris Groys, echoing this debate, innovatively discusses the relations between art and power. He addresses the recent art history in Russia, which was left out of the criteria of dominant evaluation and criticism precisely because it was linked to the propaganda of the Soviet regime—that is, it served other purposes than exclusively artistic ones, in the sense of what was considered “artistic and/or aesthetic” in the art circuit of the time.

Declaring the death of the museum has been a tradition maintained for more than a century now; we must recall the criticism of the futurists of the obsolete role of the museum. Curiously, however, this same century that has been continuously reasserting its death was also the one that witnessed its expansion more overwhelmingly. In São

Paulo alone, we can identify the Football Museum, opened in 2008, and the Museum of Sexual Diversity, inaugurated in 2012.

The question, however, is not of numbers, but especially of the fundamental role the museum plays, despite its alleged death sentences, for the circuit, circulation, nurturing, training and promotion of what is understood as art.

4 Beyond Specificity

If the process of decolonization of art history has been part of discussions surrounding the museum, we must call to mind, even if briefly, the debates related to the specificities of the means and the media—such as painting, sculpture etc.—advocated by the modernist critique championed by Clement Greenberg.

Such thinkers as Rosalind Krauss rightly advocate the shift from a purist vision to one that incorporates hybridization and contamination between languages. Indeed, such concepts as “expanded field,” “extended field,” “interfaced fields,” among many others, seek to accommodate the pluralism of contemporary productions that no longer fit into rigid taxonomies, but which sprawl onto diverse areas, within of a cross-cutting view.

That is to say, contemporary language—often within the process of artistic dematerialization, the conceptual practices undertaken from the 1960s on and the hybridizations in the field of language—posed questions not only regarding the symbolic issues and the understanding we had about art, but also inquiries about customary museum-oriented and archival practices.

There is not only an art history crisis, but an accompanying institutional crisis that finds itself in an impasse in regard to the incorporation, in its collection, of contemporary art proposals which not rarely put into question valid premises for traditional institutions: instead of permanence, transience; instead of autonomy, contextualization; authorship shatters faced with the poetics of appropriation, and uniqueness is challenged by the technological reproducibility. Rigid classifications such as painting or sculpture, which until recently were considered commonplace, often cannot accommodate the pluralism and intersection of languages characteristic of contemporary poetics.

This expansion of the artistic field, combined with collaborative, participatory, ephemeral, mediatic artworks thus ushers in new ways of documenting, cataloging and preserving artworks. We should add to this brief account the digital works that often require emulation processes, due to their nature of works susceptible to “programmed” obsolescence of the technologies they employ.

Within this perspective, it is worth recalling the example used by Cristina Freire in her book *Poéticas do Processo* (1999). At one point in the book, when analyzing the official art narrative adopted by MoMA, centered on its permanent objects and aligned with a modernist view of artistic practices, the author points out the institution’s difficulty in dealing with productions that break with traditional protocols. She says:

Joseph Kosuth, one of the most important North American conceptual artists, presented at the MoMA in New York the work *One and three chairs* (1965), where he juxtaposed the royal chair to its representations (a dictionary definition of chair and a photograph of a chair). Although it was acquired by MoMA, this work was destroyed when it was incorporated into the

museum's collection, since the chair was sent to the Design department, the photo to the Photography department and the photocopy of the definition of chair to the Library! (Freire 1999, pp. 45–46).

5 The White Cube and the Museum-Temple

It is interesting to approach the role of the museum from the image of enclosed, neutral space contained in the expression “White Cube.”

In his essay “Inside the White Cube” published in the *Artforum* magazine in 1976, the artist Brian O’Doherty presents a critique of the modernist exhibition space as established by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in the first half of the 20th century.

O’Doherty describes the space of the modernist gallery as “constructed along laws as rigorous as those for building a medieval church.” The fundamental principle of this space is that the “outside world must not come in, so usually windows are sealed. Walls are painted white. The ceiling becomes the source of light,” he claims.

Introspective and self-referential, the white cube is a space-temple, a sacralized, aseptic and timeless environment, far from the reality of the world. “In classical modernist galleries, as in churches, one does not speak in a normal voice; one does not laugh, eat, drink, lie down, or sleep,” points out Thomas McEvelley in the introduction to O’Doherty’s essay.

6 From the Museum-Temple to the Museum-Spectacle

Museums, as privileged grounds for the exhibition of cultural referents, have based their activities for centuries on an aura of historical and cultural authenticity of the objects they collected and exhibited. Such criteria as originality, language specificity, universal historical narrative, sacred exhibition spaces, were used for centuries to bestow the construction of narratives according to the cultural authority of modern museums.

The impact of the media, the establishment of digital culture, as well as the phenomenon of globalization, triggered profound changes in the field of culture and, consequently, in museums. The most pessimistic investigations of this new moment maintain the idea that the process of globalization, by radically removing culture from its spatial constraint, has promoted a process of cultural homogenization.

Economic globalization would, according to this view, be linked to the cultural globalization within a context in which culture would become a commodity produced and consumed on a global scale. From this perspective we would be experiencing a shifting process, from the museum-temple to the museum-spectacle.

In an interview to the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* in the 1990s, the critic of postmodernity, Fredric Jameson, points out that the field of culture is one of the key foundations of what he calls late capitalism. He thus claims:

It is an immense ‘dedifferentiation,’ in which the old frontiers between economic production and cultural life are disappearing. Culture is business and products are made for the market; (...) mass culture is no longer a set of radio comedies and Hollywood musicals and romances. It is a much more sophisticated production, made by talented people (...) in the logic of ‘thingification,’ the ultimate intention is to transform objects of all kinds into commodities. It doesn’t matter if these objects are movie stars, feelings or political experience.

Jameson’s “dedifferentiation” does not, however, limit itself to erasing the old frontiers between super and infrastructure, but it draws to mass consumption a set of manifestations hitherto labeled as elitist—such as art exhibitions, for instance—that are now projected on the mediatic agendas as mega-events. They occupy museums, cultural centers and outdoor spaces, attracting public financing and private sponsorship by taking advantage of tax incentive and tax exemption laws. Touring shows of artists the likes of Monet, Rodin, Cézanne and Picasso work as an attention-grabber for large-scale deals that start at the box office and sprawl onto the sale of catalogs, reproductions of paintings, videos, posters, calendars, t-shirts and other souvenirs.

Douglas Kellner, in *Media Culture and the Triumph of the Spectacle*, provides a very clarifying example of the spectacularization of culture in today’s society:

[...] Bringing the spectacle into the world of high art, the Guggenheim Museum’s Thomas Krens organized a retrospective on Giorgio Armani, the Italian fashion designer. Earlier, Krens produced a Guggenheim show exhibiting motorcycles and plans to open a Guggenheim gallery in the Venetian Resort Hotel Casino in Las Vegas with a seven-story Guggenheim art museum next to it. (Kellner, in Moraes 2006, p. 132).

It is no coincidence that the German theorist Andreas Huyssen (1997, p. 223) claims that “the museum’s role as site of an elitist conversation, a bastion of tradition and high culture gave way to the museum as mass medium, as a site of spectacular *mise-en-scène* and operatic exuberance.”

This spectacularization is also seen through buildings often commissioned from star architects, such as the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, designed by Frank Gehry, or the MAXXI museum in Rome, by Zaha Hadid.

Allied to the notion of cultural tourism, many of the museums that appeared after the 1990s incorporate major architectural projects that simultaneously reshape entire urban areas, such as Museu do Amanhã (Museum of Tomorrow), inaugurated in 2015 in Rio de Janeiro, and designed by Santiago Calatrava. Started in 2010, the conception of the work by the Spanish architect relates to the urban remodeling of the surroundings of Mauá Square, as well as to the overall urban upgrading project of the port region of Rio de Janeiro, from which the museum benefits, with open spaces resulting from the demolition of Perimetral.

In many cases, as Rosalind Krauss points out in her essay “The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalism Museum” (published in the *October* magazine in the 1990s), the collection is not the central issue regarding the institution, but the acceptance of spectacular exhibition proposals that aim not only at giving visibility to the institution, but also attracting large sums in investment.

Many of these institutions tend to fit into a spectacular dynamic in which the number of visitors is one of the main indicators of success or failure of the venture. In São Paulo, for example, the exhibition *Obsessão infinita* (Infinite Obsession), by the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, held from May 22 to July 27, 2014, at the Tomie Ohtake

Institute, was seen by 522,136 visitors, 43,000 of those alone during the exhibition's final weekend on view. Castelo Rá Tim Bum, held at Museu da Imagem e do Som, received more than 80,000 visitors during the two months it remained on view.

On the other hand, it is possible to notice, in many of these more recent shows, a completely different behavior of the public in relation to the exhibition space. Many people stood in front of the exhibited works, while cell phones or tablets recorded their presence at the show; presence that would gain prominence with the subsequent shares of those images on social networks, overflowing and imploding the notion of modernist white cube.

7 Experimental Museums and Radical Museology

It will be inaccurate from our part, however, to believe in the idea that this model of museum could be the only representative of the contemporary, even because the idea of contemporaneity points not toward a homogeneous view, but toward a heterogeneous and hybrid one.

From a different perspective, we can consider the museum less as a space of well-established definitions and narratives, and more as a kind of laboratory, territory for creating, experimenting with and producing knowledge. Not surprisingly, Walter Zanini, in his role as the director of MAC (Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo), writes in the catalog of the 6th Contemporary Young Art Exhibition (JAC, or *Exposição de Jovem Arte Contemporânea*), held in 1972:

(...) the directors of institutions have become absolutely aware of the impossibility of their entities remaining exclusively in the condition of technical organs of appropriation, preservation and exhibition of art objects, that is, of organs expectant of products destined for their contemplative exhibition rooms. (Zanini *apud* Freire 1999, p. 53).

The JACs, idealized by Walter Zanini in the late 1960s at MAC, can be seen not only as spaces to foster and legitimize the production of young Brazilian artists and to incorporate language production with new media and techniques in the museum space, but also as spaces to broaden discussions about the role of the contemporary art museum as forum and laboratory during the harsh years of military dictatorship in Brazil (1964–1985).

Without intending to exhaust the subject, I would like to allude to Claire Bishop's essay *Radical Museology Or, What's 'Contemporary' in Museums of Contemporary Art?* In this essay, Bishop departs from a critique of Rosalind Krauss's text *The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalism Museum*, in which the American critic, in dialogue with Fredric Jameson's essay *The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, points out that contemporary museums are the expression of a consumerist logic implemented in the field of culture in the present time.

In a first moment, Claire Bishop recognizes the difficulty in specifying what is contemporary, in addition to the impossibility of utilizing this notion within a universal and global perspective, not only in face of local particularities, but also of the different typologies of museums that exist today.

Bishop calls radical museology the experiences of museums that today can be called contemporary, and which somehow managed to distance themselves from the model of museum-spectacle. That is to say, they are an alternative to situate the institution museum in the 21st century.

These museums, somehow, would be those that can be considered, as Agamben would say, institutional spaces that are located in the dark and that occur beyond the usual spaces of the entertainment industry.

The author then cites three European museums that fall into this possible typology of Radical Museology: The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven; the Queen Sofia Museum in Spain; and the Sodobne Museum in Ljubljana. What they have in common is precisely the fact that they present projects that raise issues about the complexity of what it means to be contemporary and what is a museum in the contemporary world.

In the plans for the Van Abbemuseum, the collection, which is comprised of modern art, is continuously thought out from curatorial propositions. In the strategies adopted, it is worth mentioning the project “Time Machine: Museum Modules” (2009), which was an exhibition about exhibitions—that is, an exhibition addressing exhibition design, revealing that the exhibition formats are linked to certain curatorial visions. The exhibition thus shed light on the strategies devised by art institutions to exhibit works from their collection and the installation discourse that engendered them. The show, included, for example, in addition to works and furniture from MoMA’s collection, the transparent displays designed by Lina Bo Bardi for MASP in 1969.

The Queen Sophia Museum, in turn, has been developing an exercise in revisiting history and art history. In recent years, the museum has adopted a self-critical stance regarding the Spanish representation of colonialism, positioning Spain and its history in a broader international context of revisions of history and art history. According to Bishop, what is at issue here is less the amount of people that will visit the institution, and much more how the audience will see the work.

The Sodobne Museum in Slovenia, founded in 2011, despite having no fixed headquarters and a very small budget, has become the epicenter of alternative culture in Ljubljana. One of the strategies adopted by the museum is not only reenacting exhibitions already held, expanding and broadening the original exhibition format, but also working with archival material, such as the “An Archive of Performance Art” project, which showed, in different ways, this type of practice through photographs, video, objects and re-performances.

The description of the cases studied by Bishop provides us with clues and tools to come up, at the present time, with alternatives to contemporary art museums.

8 Paço Das Artes: Museum-Access: Livro_Acervo, Mapa and Ex-Paço

Questioning traditional museographic patterns, creating more experimental curatorial devices, as well as making the collection more accessible, creating more active strategies of approach to the public have been some of the strategies put into practice by Paço das Artes. An institution linked to the Secretariat of the State of São Paulo and

founded in the 1970s, Paço das Artes has created over the years a space focused on experimental art and young contemporary art, embracing the diversity of its languages.

Because it is not a museum in the strict sense of the word and, therefore, because it doesn't have a collection of works of art—and because it works in promoting and spreading the young contemporary Brazilian art—the work of registering and archiving becomes the fundamental axis of its “collection.”

We could say that the actions of Paço das Artes make up a kind of Imaginary Museum, as defined by André Malraux: the collection of Paço das Artes comprises the artists, activities, curators, critics, educators and the public that have been in contact with the institution.

It was from this perspective—that of putting into debate and questioning the institutional “collection” of Paço das Artes, which is not exactly a museum in the strict sense of the term, but in that of being allocated within the museology sector of the State Secretariat of Culture, and of giving voice to other narratives, in this case, the young Brazilian art, that is, a type of production that is not widely recognized within the larger art circuits—that I conceived a curatorial series on archive and collection, with exhibitions whose objective was to give visibility and create a space for us to reflect on this issue. This is how *Livro_Acervo* (Book_Collection), MaPA, Arquivo Vivo (Living Archive) and Ex-Paço were conceived. Far from being independent curatorial projects, they can be seen as a work-in-progress, in which each curatorship and/or project expands and updates the discussion of previous projects.

9 Livro_Acervo

The first project, *Livro_Acervo*, was conceived by me in 2010 for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of Paço das Artes. The initial idea was to develop a “big” curatorial project that not only could revive the memory of Paço das Artes—the players and agents that were part of its history—but also offering viewers the possibility of accessing a curatorial project that would extend beyond the traditional exhibition space.

This perspective led to the idea of developing not only a curatorial project in the scope of the book—a kind of movable, touring curatorship—but also of developing a curatorship from the institution's “archive” and “collection,” reviving one of its most important projects: the Project Season¹.

The project was comprised of three main parts². In the first one, 30 artists who were selected for the Project Season were invited to develop an original work on paper sheets (such as the flip book *Naufrágio* [Sinking], developed by the artist Laura Belém). These works were printed for free distribution, together with the other items

¹ Paço das Artes's experimental vocation is confirmed mainly through the *Project Season*, which was created with the objective of giving opportunity for the production, promotion and spreading of the production by young artists. Conceived in 1996 by the technical director Ricardo Ribenboim and the then curator of the institution, Daniela Bousso, the *Project Season* had its first exhibition held in 1997 and became, over the years, a rich incubator for the young contemporary Brazilian art scene.

² Departing from the initial idea of the project, we invited the artists Artur Lescher and Lenora de Barros to develop and design the first curatorial project for *Livro_Acervo*.

that made up the project. In the same insert as the artists' notebooks there was the Enciclopédia (Encyclopaedia), the second part of the project, with information on each of the artists, curators and jury members that participated in the Project Season from its first edition. The third part consisted of a sound work of up to one minute, recorded on a CD-ROM, developed by the artists and curators who participated in the Project Season. It should be noted that the project (consisting of these three parts) took the form of a box/file, alluding exactly to the idea that this device contains a significant portion of Paço das Artes's history and part of the young contemporary Brazilian art.

10 Mapa

Moving forward with the Livro_Acervo project, in November 2014 we implemented MaPA: Memória Paço das Artes (Paço das Artes Memory), a digital platform for contemporary art that brought together all the artists, critics, curators and jury members that participated in the Project Season from its creation in 1996.

The platform is comprised of a database with more than 870 images of the works showcased in the Project Season, as well as nearly 270 critical texts and video interviews that have been especially developed for this project since 2014. Gathering more than 240 artists, 14 curatorial projects, 70 art critics and 43 jury members, the platform was built as a relational device and a work-in-progress, offering researchers the opportunity to access information from existing relationships in the Project Season.

At MaPA's home page, the public is presented, through a random system, to several names of artists, critics, curators, and jury members. By hovering the mouse cursor over any of these names/links, MaPA highlights, in bold, the other names involved in that edition of the Season. This is how a research on the MaPA platform begins: as a relational device that allows the public to get to know the trajectory of each artist together with the critic who evaluated them and the jury that selected them. The emphasis attributed to this "relational" history is explained in the dialogue with the proposal of the Project Season itself, which, by selecting artists, curators and critics at the beginning of their careers, ends up revealing talents in the art scene. This is why the organization and referencing to the information on the platform is made through the artists, curators and critics, valuing the trajectories and creative development of all involved in the production and in the contemporary art system.

Thus, MaPA can be seen not only as a device to revive part of Paço das Artes's trajectory and its "collection," but also as a fertile research device for all those interested in the directions of the young Brazilian contemporary art.

Last but not least, MaPA is a triggering instrument for the construction of other narratives in the history of the Brazilian art, of the young contemporary Brazilian art, which has rare opportunities of participating in or is altogether excluded from the discourses of the official art history.

11 Ex-Paço

As the last project of this trilogy, I would like to emphasize the work in development, Ex-Paço³, conceived and idealized by me and Sérgio Nesteriuk after the change of headquarters of Paço das Artes, formerly located at the University of São Paulo.

Ex-Paço is a virtual, three-dimensional replica of Paço das Artes⁴, with versions for computer (local and online), smartphone, cardboards and virtual reality glasses. Modeled in 3D from Paço das Artes's last headquarters, Ex-PAÇO is not only a memory space—in the sense that it recovers, in virtual reality, the former site/headquarters of the institution, and in this sense a political space, of resistance, if we may say so—but also a digital museum aimed at housing different curatorial projects and manifestations of contemporary art.

This new browsable space, suggestively allocated in the “outer space,” is the starting point for us to think about new curatorial and exhibition dynamics enhanced by new technologies. These, therefore, aren't digital works shown in a museum or on a website, but rather the exhibition space itself becomes digital, virtual, thus opening up new creative possibilities within the exhibition field.

If in the *Livro_Acervo* and in the MaPA digital platform what was in focus were the strategies of access and information to Paço das Artes's collection—in the sense of contributing to the construction of the narrative of the young contemporary Brazilian art—in Ex-PAÇO, a project under development, what is at issue is not only the possibility of creating a digital museum, a museum without walls, for the development of online curatorial projects, but, especially, shedding light on the importance of Paço das Artes as a site for artistic creation and experimentation.

In this sense, it can be seen not just as a mobile space, but as a virtual political and critical site in relation to the history of the loss of Paço das Artes's headquarters, an outgrowth of issues regarding a specific moment of the institution.

12 Conclusion

It is in this sense that we understand this “museum,” that I designate here as museum-interface, a museum that implodes the white cube and that presents museum-oriented and curatorial strategies that somehow give way to other voices that are not present in the traditional, spectacular sites.

The art institution is, in this sense, called for to reflect on its practice, especially the public institutions that, in principle, should exercise a democratic role and provide effective access to cultural assets. The issue here is thinking the museum as a

³ Idealization and Conception by Priscila Arantes and Sérgio Nesteriuk. Undertaking: Memulab (Laboratory of Memory and Museum), Transmidialab, Group of Studies in Design, Art and Memory, and DEED – Research Group in Design, Entertainment and Education (UAM).

⁴ In the late 2015, Paço das Artes had to leave the headquarters it occupied since the 1990s, at the district Cidade Universitária, inside the premises of the University of São Paulo. Created in the 1970s, Paço das Artes never had a definitive headquarters. Currently, the institution has a temporary headquarters located inside MIS (Museu da Imagem e do Som).

participatory, action-oriented device rather than a space enclosed in itself—as a white cube, in Brian O’doherthy’s expression.

The concept of interface here concerns thinking the museum not as a temple, nor as a space for entertainment, but as a medium that engenders a social interface, a museum that incorporates a more expanded and cross-cutting view of culture.

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