
Médio Tejo



Vila Nova da Barquinha
Atalaia
Praia do Ribatejo
Tancos

Manuel João
Vieira

Vhils

Violant

Carlos
Vicente

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Vila Nova da Barquinha	18-25, 28-29, 38-39
Atalaia	26-27
Praia do Ribatejo	30-33
Tancos	34-37

Manuel João
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Arte Pública - 11 JUL 2012



Imagine we visit all the locations included in the Edp foundation Public Art programme and paint all the walls white, take apart the installations in their spaces, erase the works of art created in countless towns across the country. What effect would this have on these people's lives?

Edp foundation Public Art is a map comprised of a set of works of art created in public spaces, in small towns located in various Portuguese regions. A programme designed by the edp foundation to bring rural communities into closer contact with art, while also provoking reflection on its role in society.

Traffic lights transformed into traditional figures like the woman with a headscarf? Two intertwined tree roots with arms and legs? A windmill on top of a donkey? A man on a ladder catching stars? "Beautiful" works that are "good for the town", as the people from these communities say, without going to great lengths to extrapolate meaning beyond the signifiers that are presented to them. It is at this ground zero, at this starting point, that lies the urgency of the Edp foundation Public Art programme.

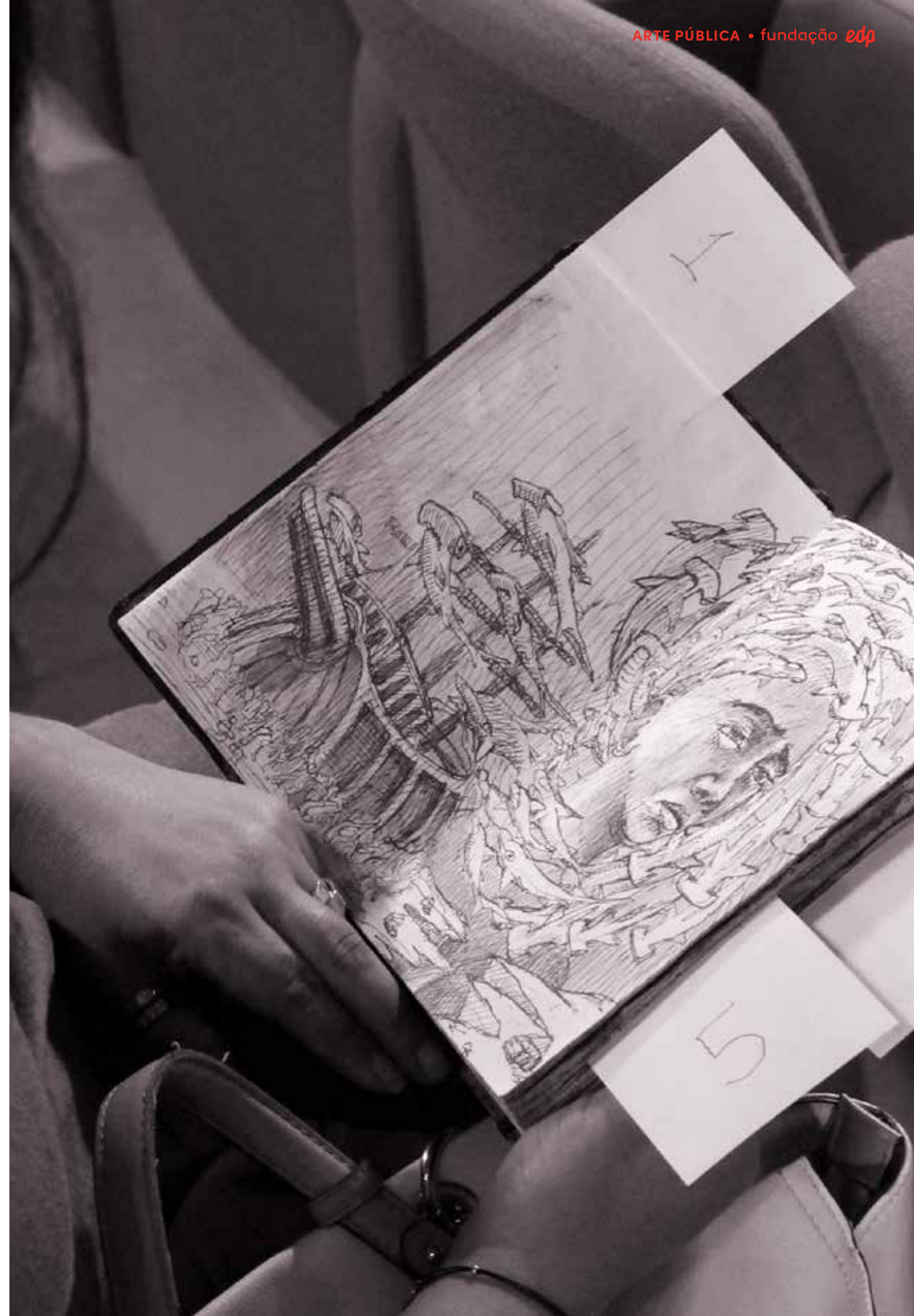
Edp foundation Public Art introduces a contemporary idea of visual culture through a concerted contact with populations. For many, the concept of art is still associated with a notion of handicrafts or an idea of truth-art, where the artistic object assumes the role of replicating reality, in a mimetic embellishment of it, as explains the visual artist Xana, a member of the 1980s art movement 'Homeoestética' and one of the artists in the Edp foundation Public Art project that left their mark in locations across the Algarve.

In each region, associations and artists were challenged to present proposals for public interventions, ranging from painting and sculpture to video and/or sound installation. The artists set out across the country with two premises. The first was not to play the role of educator, but rather facilitator. To place tools at the populations' disposal for them to discover how the whole process of artistic creation develops, from brainstorming to defining themes, to the use of techniques and the actual creation, to the result. And the second was to demystify art as an elitist and inaccessible practise. Art has, at its premise, a political matrix: to give freedom, to provide a path and a choice.

Local institutions were involved to define which public spaces were available, as well as which equipment from the EDP Distribuição network—the edp foundation's corporate partner in this project—would be subject to intervention. And, in each location, the population was invited to participate in community meetings. The townspeople met the artists and introduced themselves. They suggested themes for the works, told stories and explained their traditions, talked about their main economic activities and prominent personalities.

The artists had the task of internalising the suggestions and integrating the proposed themes into their work and composition. Models of the "soon-to be-art" were made and then presented to the population.

PP 4 & 5: Community meeting, Tancos, 2017. — P 7: Community meeting, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2017.



Days of work followed, of making art. In the community, curiosity and closeness to the artists grew. Did they need anything? Water? Something to eat? Breaks were taken in the street's café, hanging out with the locals.

Edp foundation Public Art is this converging point where artistic intention meets social intention. It is a programme that drives a sense of belonging, which endures, regardless of the paint starting to chip, of the rain falling and making the colours fade. In this sense, there is a dual sense of belonging. This artistic heritage belongs to the people, to the community. Which is why we have created, in each region, tours with local guides, which are also a link, a connection between the populations and those who visit them. And rather than feeling isolated from the world, it makes them feel part of a notion of contemporaneity that experiences visual culture at an astonishing speed. If on the one hand art bonds, bonds a town's identity, on the other hand it flows, it allows new uses and approaches.

Minho

Braga
Crespos e Pousada
Padim da Graça
Merelim (São Paio)
Panoias e
Parada de Tibães
Palmeira

Ribatejo

Rio Maior
Vila da Marmeleira
Assentiz
São João da Ribeira
Ribeira de São João

Médio Tejo

Vila Nova da Barquinha
Atalaia
Praia do Ribatejo
Tancos

Trás-os-Montes

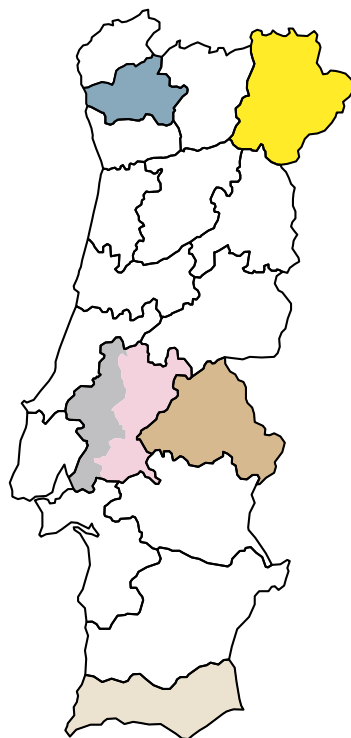
Alfândega da Fé
Torre de Moncorvo
Miranda do Douro
Mogadouro

Alto Alentejo

Campo Maior
Degolados
Ouguela

Algarve

Vila do Bispo
Barão de São João
Mexilhoeira Grande
Figueira
S. Bartolomeu de Messines
Alte
Alportel



Adolescências (Adolescents - execution), Carlos Vicente w/ students from Escola D. Maria II school, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2019.



Vila Nova da Barquinha

① NAU CATRINETA, Carlos Vicente
w/ students from CEAC – Centro de
Estudos de Arte Contemporânea
(Centre for Contemporary Art Studies)

② SOPHIA, Violant
③ ADOLESCÊNCIAS
(*ADOLESCENTS*), Carlos Vicente w/
students from Escola D. Maria II school

④ MAYDAY, Violant
⑥ QUASE BANDA DESENHADA
(*ALMOST A COMIC STRIP*), Manuel
João Vieira

⑪ VERTIGO, Violant

Atalaia

⑤ VILA DE OLEIROS (*POTTER'S
TOWN*), Vhils

Praia do Ribatejo

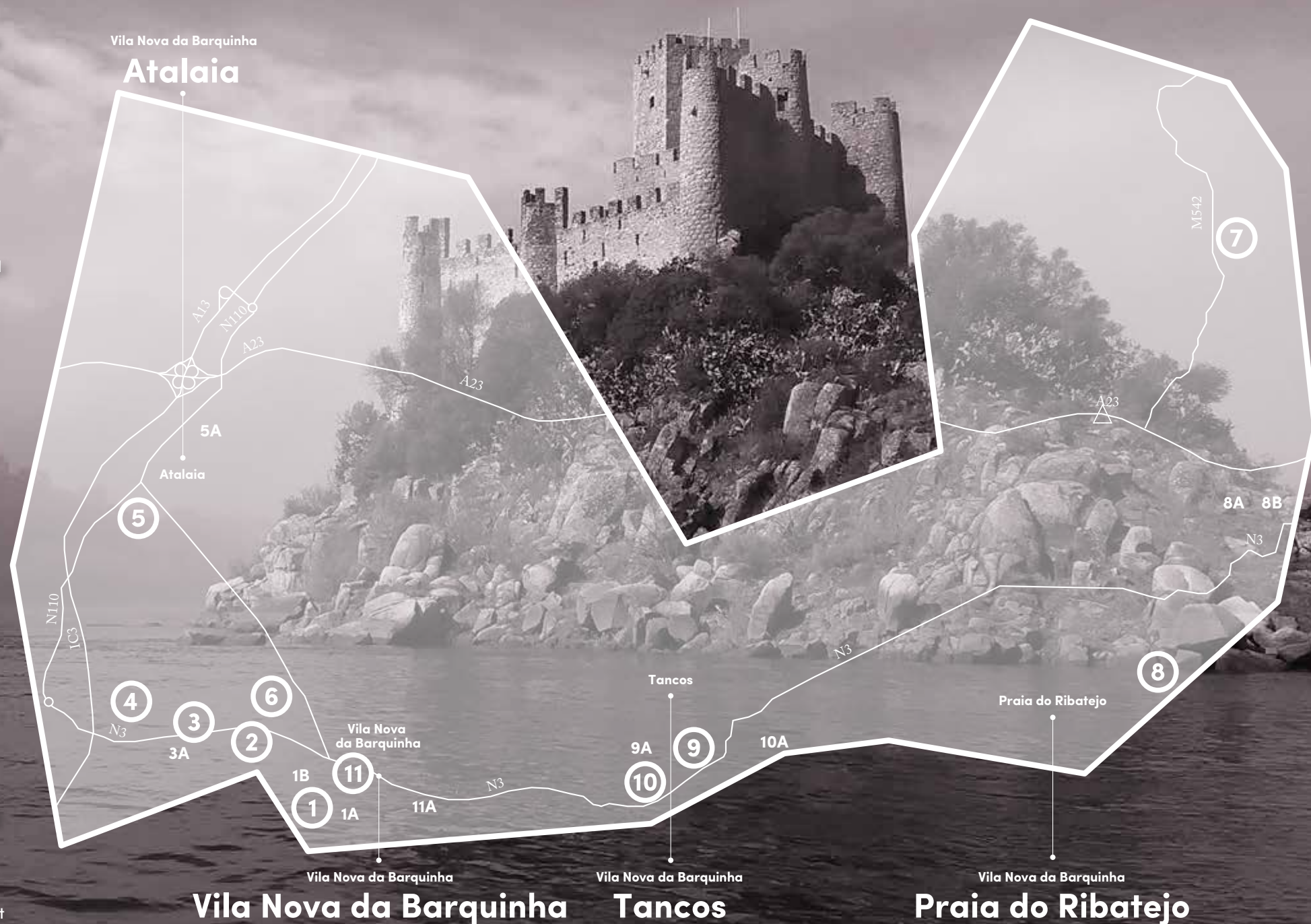
⑦ O CAMPO (*THE FIELD*), Carlos
Vicente

⑧ AUSÊNCIA (*ABSENCE*), Violant
w/ students from Universidade Sénior
Praia do Ribatejo Tancos (*Senior
University*)

Tancos

⑨ MÃOS DE ARRAIS (*BOATMAN'S
HANDS*), Carlos Vicente

⑩ NOAH, O BARQUEIRO (*NOAH,
THE BOATMAN*), Violant & Carlos Vicent



Médio Tejo Artejo

Vila Nova da Barquinha

Partner:

Vila Nova da Barquinha
Municipal Council

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facebook.com/artejo.
vnb/

During our journey on the municipality's bus to see the 11 works of the Edp foundation Public Art project in the council of Vila Nova da Barquinha, the representatives from each town council joke amongst each other, claiming the prettiest landscapes, the best accesses, listing accomplishments. Once a land of the Knights Templar, Almourol castle can be seen in the distance, when we reach the EDP Distribuição secondary substation located beside the railway stop in Tancos.



This monument is considered the region's most important landmark, as someone from the town council makes a point of mentioning. We leave behind numerous enclosed fields that belong to the Tancos military base, which includes the 1st Engineering Regiment, the Rapid Response Brigade and the Parachute Regiment.



On the other side of the river Tagus lies Arripiado, a village in the Chamusca council. On the secondary substation beside Tancos station, there is a sketch of rugged hands holding a pole. Created by Carlos Vicente, they are a tribute to his grandfather, a boatman in the past, who transported people and cargo between the two shores. Before the arrival of the railway in Portugal in the 19th century, Tancos was also an important riverport. A region of potters, artefacts crafted from clay were the principal merchandise shipped to Lisbon.

"The artists chose the sites, but we made sure all four of the council's towns were included", explains Carlos Vicente, field coordinator of Edp foundation Public Art –



Community meeting,
Praia do Ribatejo, 2017.

Artejo, also an artist and senior cultural official at the Vila Nova da Barquinha Municipal Council. In the afternoon, we were given a guided tour of the Centro de Interpretação Templário (Knights Templar Interpretation Centre) by the mayor Fernando Freire, elected in 2017, along with the students of the Instituto Politécnico de Tomar (Polytechnical Institute) who are in the first edition of the country's Military Tourism course, launched in December 2018.



Community meeting, Vhils &
Carlos Vicente, Atalaia, 2017.

The idea is to establish a partnership with the Tancos Military Base and use the infrastructures of the various campuses to offer leisure activities, like paintball in a controlled environment or **parashooting**. "In line with our cultural philosophy, we promote art, two examples being the Almourol Contemporary Sculpture Park and Santo António Gallery, resulting from a partnership with the edp foundation", states

Community meeting,
Atalaia, 2017.

Community meeting,
Tancos, 2017.

Technical visit, Vhils & Manuel
João Vieira, Tancos, 2017.

Fernando Freire. "To give the council's residents access to art and culture, and expose them to this form of expression, and life, as a community." The Cultural Centre houses an auditorium, the tourism office and the Knights Templar Interpretation Centre, which opened in November 2018 and is a library-archive focused



on the Templars. "The Edp foundation Public Art – Artejo programme is one more element to put Vila Nova da Barquinha on the map", says the councillor for Culture, Marina Honório. "The goal is to develop a series of routes – from historic to cultural, about the heritage or cuisine –, to provide visitors with an integrated tour experience."

Regarding the populations' involvement in Artejo, Marina Honório believes there were very interesting meetings and debates. "Some of the artists were really good at explaining what



Adolescências (Adolescents - execution),
Carlos Vicente w/ students from Escola D. Maria II
school, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2019.

Quase Banda Desenhada
(Almost a Comic Strip), Manuel João Vieira,
Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2018.

they were going to do." The municipal council's partnership with the edp foundation is longstanding. "It is our major partner in the arts and culture", namely curating and assisting us with spaces and events like Galeria do Parque (Gallery in the Park), the Santo António Gallery and Mercado das Artes (Arts Market). The Centro de Estudos de Arte Contemporânea (Centre for Contemporary Art Studies), located in Casa da Hidráulica on Rua da Barca, provides theoretical and practical workshops, for adults and children, in drawing, painting, photography, video, theatre and puppetry, under a protocol established between the



municipality, the Instituto Politécnico de Tomar and edp foundation. "The edp foundation helps us attract artists who we would not be able to bring otherwise." For the Arte Pública programme, eight assemblies were held, two per town council. "The community gave the artists ideas, shared the local culture.

That's how the potters appeared, the boatmen", recounts Carlos Vicente. "They were very well



attended. We must not forget that a place like Tancos has little over 200 residents."

In Tancos, the old dock that still stands is a symbol of this region's connection to the river and the old boatmen. Vila Nova da Barquinha was a land of sailors. Today, lamprey eels and shad are still fished in the area and greatly appreciated in the local cuisine, a must for those who visit. Still to the north, the council was once known for its olive groves and olive oil production. On the secondary substation in Atalaia, a land of potters, the work by Vhils is a tribute to that livelihood and those men who used clay to make the community's life better.

"An initiative like this is important on several levels. It helps embellish the public space and, therefore, improves the community's wellbeing. It lets the artists interact directly with the population, to help protect the traditional culture,



The marshlands along the banks of the Tagus make up this territory's landscape. The Almourol Contemporary Sculpture Park is located in one of them, included in the seven hectares of Barquinha



preserving the memory of the past and bringing it into the present, building a bridge between generations, communities, urban environments and rural environments", considers Alexandre Farto, aka Vhils. "And because, this way, an institution with the edp foundation's weight supports new talent and a new generation of artists, who come from a particular environment and are often ignored by institutions."



Rui Chafes, Fernanda Fragateiro, Xana and Joana Vasconcelos, helping drive tourism in Vila Nova da Barquinha. "It's a completely different place now", states Carlos Vicente. "With the Contemporary Art Park, many old houses were recuperated, hotels opened, terraces spread around the square. Art really helped Vila Nova da Barquinha", Carlos Vicente concludes. "And the park was the catalyst."



Park, which won the 2007 National Landscape Architecture Award in the category Outdoor Spaces for Public Use. The Contemporary Sculpture Park has works by José Pedro Croft, Cabrita Reis,



Community meeting, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2017.

Adolescências (Adolescents - execution), Carlos Vicente w/ students from Escola D. Maria II school, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2019.

Manuel João Vieira (1962)



Founded the movement Homeostética in the 1980s, with Pedro Portugal, Ivo Silva, Pedro Proença and Xana, the artist who coordinated Edp foundation Public Art in the Algarve. At the time, they were still students at Lisbon's Faculty of Fine Arts. Visual artist and musician, known as a band member of Ena Pá 2000, Irmãos Catita and Corações de Atum, Manuel João Vieira is still in the band Ases da Paleta and the collective Orgasmo Carlos. Orgasmo Carlos includes photography, sculpture, painting, performance and installation. This was the project he used to announce he was running for President of the Republic in 2011 and 2016.

Alexandre Farto, aka Vhils (1987)



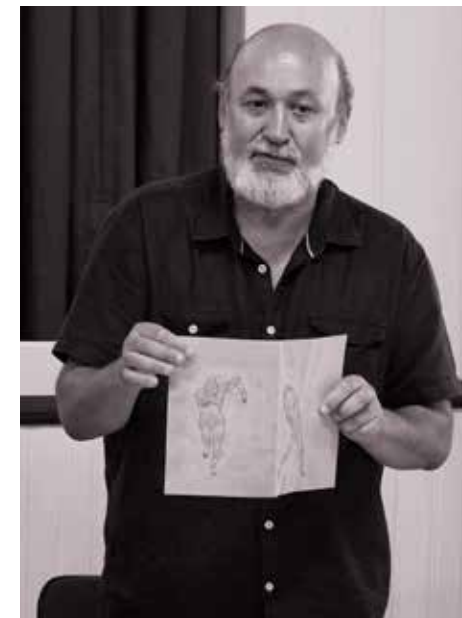
Began his artistic activity as a writer, gained public exposure at the VSP group exhibition in Lisbon in 2007, and at The Cans Festival in London the following year. He grew up in Seixal, an industrial suburb that underwent profound economic and social change in the 1980s and 1990s, which shaped his artistic vision. His technique of carving the surface and creating bas-relief has become his trademark, and he has exhibited his work in more than 30 countries, in solo and collective exhibitions at entities such as Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Barbican Centre in London and CAFA Art Museum in Peking. In Portugal, his first exhibition in an institutional context was at the Tejo Power Station in Lisbon, with *Dissecção (Dissection)*, in 2014.

João Maurício, aka Violant (1988)



A graphic designer, he produced his first mural a year and a half ago. Until then, his journey in visual and street art had been rooted in studio work – painting, silkscreen printing, T-shirts, block printing (similar to engraving, but using wood). Spent three months in India (where this technique is widely used) and, when he returned, felt the need to apply it to larger media. He draws his inspiration from nature, developing it with geometric motifs, textures and patterns. Lives in Riachos, Torres Novas and, as a teenager, had difficulty deciding what he wanted to do. In secondary school, he came into direct contact with drawing through his colleagues in the professional course he attended in Torres Novas, and became exposed to the world of graffiti. He obtained a degree in Visual Arts and Multimedia in Santarém and started painting – always in the street. He has works in Castelo Branco, Entroncamento, Lisbon, Fernão Ferro, Santarém, Gante – in Belgium –, Braga and Coimbra.

Carlos Vicente (1956)



Born in Tancos, he was a bank clerk in Lisbon and quickly tired of spending his life on trains. Carlos Vicente attended the first two years of drawing and painting at Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes (*Fine Arts Society*) and then completed a degree in Visual Arts from Instituto Politécnico de Tomar (*Polytechnical Institute*). Later, he obtained a Master in Cultural Tourism, also from the same institution. A senior cultural official at the Vila Nova da Barquinha Municipal Council, he was involved in the creation of the Almourol Contemporary Sculpture Park, and is the coordinator of CEAC – Centro de Estudos de Arte Contemporânea (*Centre for Contemporary Art Studies*).

①

Nau Catrineta

Author:

Carlos Vicente w/
students from CEAC -
Centro de Estudos de
Arte Contemporânea
(Centre for Contempo-
rary Art Studies)

This work welcomes visitors. Located beside the Contemporary Sculpture Park, inside Barquinha Park, this water tower could only have the river, the Tagus, as its subject matter, the driver of the region's economy for centuries. The grandfather of the author, Carlos Vicente, a senior cultural official at the Vila Nova da Barquinha Municipal Council and field coordinator of Edp foundation Public Art - Artejo, was a river boatman. Carlos' childhood was spent on the riverbank, launching paper boats on the water with his friends. That is the memory this naïf intervention aims to etch in time, and there is an ideal viewpoint to admire the painting in its full splendour: precisely at the

town entrance, as soon as we notice the building's presence, and where the vertex of the two visible façades meets at the centre.

"These were the paper boats we would place on the river as children, to go with the wind", mentions Carlos Vicente, a former bank clerk in Lisbon who, years ago, decided to switch his life spent on trains for a more fulfilling lifestyle. "I used to launch many on the river, my grandfather was a fisherman and boatman in Tancos. Our games were always associated with the river. We used the agave leaves, which are spongy inside, as floats to cross the river. They float really well until they soak up inside. And we didn't even know how to swim."

Carlos Vicente attended Tancos primary school, which is located on the town's highest shore, overlooking the riverbank. "It also alludes to the ship (*nau*), in the Portuguese discoveries, which gave us horizons, brought us new perspectives." The paper boat also symbolises human frailty against the force of nature. The title, *Nau Catrineta*, is part of a folk poem, which goes: "Lá vem a nau catrineta/ Que tem muito que contar/ Sonhava eu em criança/ Poder um dia navegar" (Here comes the ship *Catrineta*/ Which has many tales to tell/ I used to dream as a child/ That one day I could sail).



The top and lower borders of the water tower's four walls are painted black, a feature repeated in other works by Carlos Vicente for the Edp foundation Public Art programme. The lower black border has small fish painted in bright colours, like an aquarium – the contrast with the black accentuating the vitality of marine life and, in a way, raising the current issue of ocean pollution. The moon was not forgotten either, with the splendour of its light reflected in the water.

If we move forward and stand in front of the other vertex formed by the walls seen from the road, the blue of the river water grows more intense at twilight. An external component that completes the painting's composition: some metallic stairs that access the water tower's upper level. As though we could climb to the sky. Not any sky, but a naïf sky, with artificial colours, like in a child's dream, painted on the walls of a building.



TOWN Council:
VILA NOVA DA
BARQUINHA

Location:
Largo 1º de Dezembro

GPS:
Latitude 39.45737766
Longitude -8.43317628



Nau Catrineta, Carlos Vicente w/ students of CEAC - Centro de Estudos de Arte Contemporânea (Centre for Contemporary Art Studies), Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2018.

I think this programme is a real asset. It mobilises the community and involves it in public art projects, also providing contact with the artists and letting people relate to the works.

Marina Honório, councillor for Culture at Vila Nova da Barquinha Municipal Council.

②

Sophia

Author:
Violant

Wisdom could not be represented more explicitly. From the Greek *sofós*, Sophia has been personified in Classical Antiquity through feminine figures, and this one painted by Violant on the wall of a building on Rua D. Maria II, where the Vila Nova da Barquinha schools are located, is no exception. This Sophia has a large papyrus wrapped around her. "She's in an ominous environment and the surreal element lies in the fact that she is protected by something as fragile as a sheet of paper", explains Violant, the name under which João Maurício signs his artistic work. "That sheet has writings by [José] Saramago and [Fernando] Pessoa, two writers I really admire."

"Acendemos cigarros em fogos de napalme/ E dizemos amor sem saber o que seja./ Mas fizemos de ti a prova da riqueza,/ E também da pobreza,/ E pusemos em ti sei lá bem que desejo/ De mais alto que nós, e melhor e mais puro" (*We light cigarettes in napalm flames/ And say love without knowing what it is./ But we made*

you proof of richness,/ And also of poverty, and hunger again./ And we placed in you I know not what desire/ Higher than us, and better and purer). This excerpt is from a poem by José Saramago and was used as the lyrics for a song by Manuel Freire, *Fala do Velho do Restelo ao Astronauta*. It is written on the papyrus scroll.

The ominous environment Violant mentions is represented in a twilight sky, tormented by dark clouds that look like monsters hovering in the air and surrounding the muse's



head, who Violant has portrayed in warrior strokes and garments. She is a powerful woman, with prominent breasts, a slim waist, slender arms and hands. She gazes at us head-on, not challenging, but with confidence – confidence in herself. In a place populated with schools, that message of self-confidence is especially important. It's an image that is not **insignificant** to students. This warrior is waist-deep in a green field, where some daisies bloom. Those drawn against the backdrop, near the base, seem to grow from the

dirt ground in front of the wall. The stems are purple. The leaves, dark green. On top of one of the daisies, there's a ladybird, feeding off the pollen.

A small copper **coloured** bird is perched on Wisdom's right shoulder. Around her neck, she has a chain with a precious stone that looks like an aquamarine. The river and water were the subjects suggested most frequently by the population in the community meetings, where the artists explored the themes that



made sense for the works. The pieces by Violant abound with details that draw our attention as we approach them, following the first visual impact of the work as a whole. He combines the past and the future, Sophia has two circles tattooed on each arm, like bracelets, which today are a major trend among tattoo lovers. On her waist, there's an ornament, formed by a ribbon that wraps around her hips twice and displays an insignia that looks like a crest. But Violant uses this to sign his name, which **shapes** a skull.

TOWN Council:
VILA NOVA DA
BARQUINHA

Location:
Rua D. Maria II

GPS:
Latitude 39.4615898
Longitude -8.4413892



Sophia, Violant, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2018.

I'm biased. I'm also in the arts, I studied architecture. I think the project is very interesting for anyone, from any social class, to come into contact with art. Street art fulfils that purpose.

Rita Inácio, Praia do Ribatejo Ethnographic Museum, 36 years.

3

Adoles- cências

Adolescents

Author:

Carlos Vicente w/ 12th grade students from the Multimedia professional course at Escola D. Maria II school

He became interested in art because of a book of drawings by Burne Hogarth, which he borrowed from the Gulbenkian mobile library as a child. "My works always begin with a sketch, like Hogarth's drawings", says Carlos Vicente. "I've loved to paint ever since I was little. At school, I always drew for everyone. When I saw the book, I said to myself: «Wow, I'd love to draw like that.»" Back at the EDP Distribuição secondary substation located on Rua Capitão Salgueiro Maia – EN3, in Vila Nova da Barquinha, Carlos Vicente sketched the figures of 11 students who participated in this work, 12th grade students from the Multimedia professional course at Escola D. Maria II school. The collaboration involved writing, in speech bubbles, what it means to be an adolescent and, through them, leave messages that can be useful to primary



school students. The secondary substation is located in front of the Primary School and Centro Integrado de Educação em Ciências (Integrated Science Education Centre), designed by the architects Aires Mateus. These messages are intended for the students of this education centre.

Boys and girls, the sketches of the 11 students are drawn in black against a white background, evoking the world of black and white comic strips. The secondary substation looks like a house, with yellow walls and a dark blue roof, and the characters depicted on it – painted in life-size – look like paper people talking to each other, leaning against the wall. Except, instead of only talking to each other, the speech bubbles address the spectator, with a wink to the primary school students who pass by every day. On one of the narrower sides, a girl says: "Não tenhas medo do que tu és... vive a vida ao máximo" (Don't be afraid of what you are... Live life to the fullest). In the middle, the boy with his hands in his pockets states: "Não queiras crescer muito rápido, o futuro és tu" (Don't

try to grow up too fast, you are the future). And another girl says: "Aproveita cada dia como se fosse o último" (Make the most of each day as if it were the last). On the largest side of the substation, five students are drawn. The advice revolves around the same concepts, encouraging carpe diem, believing in ourselves and our capabilities. The phrases are typical teen clichés, but the cliché gains strength through repetition and, in this case, is displayed on a wall, like a banner, always there to be remembered. However, on the third side of the substation, where the three remaining students are drawn, one stands out: "A adolescência é a pior fase da vida" (Adolescence is the worst phase of life). This abrupt sincerity acts as a kind of glue to unite and bring truth to all the other messages. The next youth assures: "Não importa que esteja tudo contra ti, sê tu mesmo" (Even if everything's against you, be yourself). To reinforce the hope that better days will come, a third girl's speech bubble has a little red heart drawn, alluding to today's world of communication, made of emojis.



TOWN Council:
VILA NOVA DA
BARQUINHA

Location:
Rua Capitão Salgueiro
Maia – EN3

GPS:
Latitude 39.46246782
Longitude -8.44671607



Adolescências (Adolescents - execution), Carlos Vicente w/ students from Escola D. Maria II school, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2019.

This is an initiative that acknowledges urban and rural regions, bringing modern art to local traditions. It's also a way to build interaction between the younger and older populations. As an adornment of the public space, it enables the creation of tourism niches, for people who are interested in public art and want to visit works by renowned artists.

Ana Isabel Alves, senior official at Vila Nova da Barquinha Municipal Council, 37 years.

④

Mayday

Author:
Violant

Mayday, mayday. The alarm is sounded by this intervention Violant produced on the EDP Distribuição secondary substation in Cardal. "The river was one of the subjects discussed at the meetings with the population and I decided to express my concern regarding its pollution", mentions Violant. "There's a cod fishing boat called Joana Princesa docked in Aveiro and I imagined this surreal picture of the coast washing up here. I like to create things out of context. Otherwise, I would paint Almourol castle. It's so direct that it doesn't fascinate me." He says he tries to diversify his work as much as possible, from project to project. "I consider it a challenge. I usually say I don't paint well, but I'm stubborn. I paint and paint and paint, until I get it right."

The scene depicts a large ship docked on a street, the surrounding buildings in ruins, as though bombed, with shattered buses and airplanes on the ground. The predominant shade is grey, the colour of

destruction, except for the boat's hull, in orange and purple, with the McDonald's logo. It could be the anchor. The destroyed buildings look like those we see in the news, videos or photographs of bombed cities. In this **dystopian** scenario, the missing element is precisely water. There is none. This is a way to warn about the importance of preserving and saving water, a resource that is essential to life on the planet.



It's no coincidence that there is not a soul in sight. Except for a large shark, a resilient being, that is flying. The portrayal of surrealist elements spans this artist's work.

Violant used to apply spray paint in his work, but now he always paints with brushes. He stopped using spray paint because he had to order it from Lisbon. He lives in Riachos. "I use primary colours and, from those, I make all the others. That gives me a lot of freedom. It's harder, colours can be

deceiving, they change when they dry, but it lets me create anything anywhere."

This secondary substation is beside a square that has some **banks**, under the shade of the trees, and where there is also a playground and a sports rink that belongs to the Associação Recreativa e Cultural do Cardal (*Recreational & Cultural Association*). João Machado, chairman of the Vila Nova da Barquinha town council, which includes Cardal, mentions that some people didn't understand the corrosive nature of the work, because it is in direct contact with children who play in the playground. The trees also cast shadows on the work, depending on the time of day, and some treetops hang over the substation. A detail that is found in one of the buildings drawn in this intervention by Violant may provide a clue about the piece's relevance among a younger audience: a scale is painted, like those symbolising Justice. Being just, inclusive with the environment, is a way of securing the future.



TOWN Council:
VILA NOVA DA
BARQUINHA

Location:
Rua Miguel Torga,
Cardal

GPS:
Latitude 39.46433977
Longitude -845274568



Mayday, Violant, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2018.

This is a very interesting project on a cultural level. It appeals to everyone and I think it will attract tourism. The building was empty, now it looks more elegant.

João Machado, chairman of the Vila Nova da Barquinha town council, 57 years.

5

Vila de Oleiros

Potter's Town

Author:
Vhils

This street is on the way to Santiago. Whoever passes the EDP Distribuição secondary substation, comes across the impressive figure of a man, hunched over, moulding a clay vase, leaning on a pottery wheel. This is the intervention by Alexandre Farto, aka Vhils, located in Atalaia. The photograph used by Vhils to create this piece, whose technique of carving the surface has become his trademark, is by the photographer Pêrsio Basso. The subject is called João Caetano and he was one of the three brothers who managed a family pottery business, the last to survive in Atalaia. Pêrsio Basso recounts that the invasion of shops with Chinese merchandise and cheap plastics was the final blow to the trade of these three brothers, who were inseparable. "Even when they were no longer working, they would sometimes open the workshop to try and sell the remaining items. It had a dirt floor and there was a campfire to warm them."

"The idea had always been to develop this project with the community, and the meetings were very important. I participated in some and found it rewarding to involve the people in the creative process, share ideas, more than understand the local reality and the impact of the interventions on those who live there", explains Alexandre Farto. "The process was also important to conceive and execute art as a process for social inclusion."

João Caetano's name was suggested to Vhils during one of the meetings. Caetano was a dynamic force who drove the local culture. He rehearsed the firefighter's theatre group, organised shows. It's even said he brought Amália Rodrigues to a restaurant once located in a basement in Tancos. "I thought it made sense to etch him into a wall of the town where he had so much impact", comments Vhils. "João Caetano was a very influential person in the council's former pottery trade, and my work is also about celebrating people who have given so much to their community."

Vhils states that the initial idea for the bas-relief technique he uses in his work, came to him after years spent noticing that, in the streets of Lisbon, advertising posters are not removed, and the overlay produces a thickness. "One day I

realised that I could use them as a canvas but, instead of painting over them, I could add even more layers and create compositions, cutting through those layers", he explains. Above all, he says his work attempts to make the invisible visible. This technique enabled him to establish a connection with the idea of artistic vandalism, which he had already explored through graffiti. "As I carved posters, I realised that I was bringing fragments of the city's recent history to the surface. To me, bringing those fragments of social and cultural life to the surface seemed, in symbolic terms, almost a work of archaeological nature." The piece Vila de Oleiros (Potter's Town) took one week to conclude. "A funny detail was the bench placed beside the structure, where the town's old men would sit and give their opinion. It was almost like an outdoor theatre. They would observe as the work evolved, sharing their views and discussing amongst themselves, in the true spirit of community." **entre eles, em verdadeiro espírito de comunidade."**



TOWN Council:
ATALAIA

Location:
Rua Paulino José
Correia, Atalaia

GPS:
Latitude 39.47791409
Longitude -8.45210731



Vila de Oleiros (Potter's Town), Vhils, Atalaia, 2018.

On a cultural level, this programme is very important. The work executed here in Atalaia was quite significant. It's by Vhils, a pretty famous person. It's a pity there isn't more, there should be one or two more pieces here in the town.

Manuel Honório, chairman of the Atalaia town council, 62 years.

⑥

Quase Banda Desenhada

Almost a Comic Strip

Author:
Manuel João Vieira

It ends with a reclining mermaid, preceded by a boatman holding an oar that appears to be emerging from a gun barrel. Indeed, the idea was that Manuel João Vieira's signature, a practise followed by Ratton, a gallery that specialises in artistic painting on tile, should not mark an ending. This so that the work – a strip of tiles encircling the four walls of the EDP Distribuição secondary substation at Alto da Fonte and which acts as a sash that surrounds it – has circularity. This piece by Manuel João Vieira can be viewed from any starting point.

Several options were debated at the community meetings, such as a lighthouse placed on top of a secondary substation, to symbolise the idea of bringing the coast inland; or covering the inside of an inactive secondary substation with rubber humps to provide the

visitor with a comfortable experience. "The final solution was dictated by the available resources", states Manuel João Vieira. "There was invariably the possibility of painting and I had always wanted to do something different", other than graffiti.

From a previous experience that the artist, who is also the lead singer and mentor of Ena Pá 2000, had with the Ratton Gallery, Vieira established a connection with the tile panels that decorate railway stations. "I also used the comic strip concept and forced the spectator to look around the substation."



A view that requires the act of approaching, to understand what images and possible narratives are there, but it is by looking from a distance that the work comes to life, due to the impact the customised building creates. "It's a comic strip, without a verbal narrative", the artist explains. There are no speech or thought bubbles. "The figures themselves propose an interpretation. The figures lead us to a narrative, not vice versa." The figures operate an autonomous process

within the images themselves, they grow and take over the narrative, bring it to life. To draw the figures, Manuel João Vieira invoked his memories of postcards seen on trips and connected them with images from the region. "They are associated with the symbols. And everything flows around them."

Here, Manuel João Vieira minimised the most direct aspect of irony and satire in his work. "This was a very innocent piece", he says. "When you're creating a figure, it gains a vital character, it's not static. Therefore, each mental picture may or may not contain irony. Even I, as I drew and painted, put myself in the spectator's place, and let myself be surprised by the images I was creating."

As a student at the Faculdade de Belas-Artes (Faculty of Fine Arts) in Lisbon, Manuel João Vieira experimented with the technique of painting on tile; he found it difficult at the time. "The panel is 25 metres high. I ended up adapting and creating a very graphic stroke. The techniques, both for gesture and mixing paints, are very precise."



TOWN Council:
VILA NOVA DA
BARQUINHA

Location:
Rua Elísio Gomes
(Alto da Fonte)

GPS:
Latitude 39.46474977
Longitude -8.43930781



Quase Banda Desenhada (Almost a Comic Strip), Manuel João Vieira, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2018.

It's a great asset for the council to feature works like those by Vhils and Manuel João Vieira. It adds value to the region. Furthermore, it brings the residents into contact with urban realities, and the opportunity for the artists to develop work in rural environments.

Pérsio Basso, senior communication official at the Vila Nova da Barquinha municipal council, 42 years.

⑦

O Campo

The Field

Author:
Carlos Vicente



He listened to stories told by the workers who picked olives in the adjacent olive grove while he drew, one by one, the leaves on these trees – an olive tree and a fig tree, each painted on two sides of the EDP Distribuição secondary substation in Limeiras, Praia do Ribatejo. The reference to the olive tree, drawn against the vertex that joins the two walls for each half-tree to be depicted on one façade, is clear: the secondary substation is located in a field of olive trees. The other tree, also occupying two walls in the same way, evokes a fig tree; in this case, a specific fig tree, which stands in a field on the other side of the road. It's a huge fig tree, with a large broken

trunk, and the drawing serves as its mimesis, prolonging its existence even when it is no longer there.

"Since most of the council surrounds the river [Tagus], Limeiras represents the countryside. Therefore, I represented rural elements here, both in terms of fauna and flora", states Carlos Vicente. "It was a tribute to the countryside." The trunks of the two trees were left white, the colour of the substation, and the surrounding environment was painted to define the outlines of both shapes. The backgrounds of both trees are filled in two colours – one blue, a cold colour that symbolises autumn, and the other yellow, a warm colour to evoke summer. The olive harvest takes place in the autumn, therefore, in the half of the olive tree with the blue background, a man is drawn picking olives, with the help of a pole.

The colours of these backgrounds only reach half the height of the substation, slightly above the trees. The remaining whiteness lends the work breadth of space, which ends up contrasting with the blue sky or grey clouds. On the tip of one of the fig tree's branches, a detail in the leaves stands out, digressing from the yellow background onto the white, like a provocation. A crow hovers above. There are also small details, extremely small

figures, that require the spectator to search very closely, such as a dog in the lower corner of one of the façades. On the wall facing the road, a kind of invitation is drawn: there is an open door, with only back inside, reached from some stairs, with a cat, also black, sitting halfway up the steps. There's a certain irony to this image: if the open door and the black background are seductive, due to the possibility of something new and its mysterious nature, the black cat reminds us of the misfortune that adventure may bring.

The name Burne Hogarth, the illustrator whose drawings are a reference in Carlos Vicente's work, was drawn on the façade of the secondary substation that features the olive picker, directly above Carlos Vicente's signature. Below, as a baseboard, a black strip is painted all around the building, accentuating the difference between art and life. Some weeds defy the rules and start to grow from cracks in the cement irrigation ditch that protects the four walls of the substation.



TOWN Council:
PRAIA DO RIBATEJO

Location:
Rua Humberto Delgado,
Praia do Ribatejo

GPS:
Latitude 39.49635816
Longitude -8.34837556



O Campo (The Field), Carlos Vicente, Praia do Ribatejo, 2018.

It looks nice. People take photos, even customers who come here to the restaurant.
Cláudia Franco, restaurant manager, 35 years.

8

Ausência

Absence

Author:

Author: Violant w/
Universidade Sénior
de Praia do Ribatejo
(Senior University)

"They have a museum with an exhibition on WWI and they came to talk to me. They wanted me to make a painting associated with the museum so, using the photographs and images they showed me for guidance, I drew this image in my sketch-book." Violant is referring to the Ethnographical Museum, located in Praia do Ribatejo's former primary school, where this work is painted on one of the walls. The exhibition organised by the Ethnographical Museum for the production of Edp foundation Public Art – Artejo, was called A Primeira Guerra Mundial... A História por contar (World War One... The Untold Story). Among other aspects, it addressed what is known as the Tancos Miracle: in the fields of the Tancos Military Base, 20 thousand Portuguese soldiers were trained in three months, to join the Allied flank in Flanders. "I got this idea of the family

portrait, but without the father figure. He's only represented by the chair, the uniform, the photograph, the medal and the boots." The artist first drew a sketch on paper. "I portray the state of abandonment, **bankruptcy**." In the image, a woman is holding a child, and the other, her eldest, stands beside her, grabbing her skirt. The faces don't have Portuguese features, they're universal characters – as are the signs of war and suffering. And, like in any war, faced with the absence of their husbands to guarantee there is bread on the table, women have to take on that role and leave home to work.



The sadness in this woman's gaze, her hair in a braid, is sustained by her firm stance, with one hand on the chair holding her husband's folded uniform and framed picture. That firmness indicates that she has taken on the role of father and

mother in the household, to guarantee the family's survival and elude the despair of uncertainty about her husband's return. In front of the chair, a pair of soldier's boots are painted, extremely crude, almost grotesque – a symbol that there is something insane about the steps taken in armed conflict. The children are also painted oddly, with adult faces, as though they were forbidden to enjoy their childhood and forced to adapt to the difficult life they must face.

The mother and children are in what appears to be a living room, there's a bookshelf on one side with books like *Os Lusíadas* and the Bible. The house is modest and the clothes are meagre. The three figures' formal posture also indicates they are posing for eternity – for a photograph or portrait. The presence of the soldier's small picture frame on the chair represents their tribute to him. The window behind them has a green curtain, finished in white lace. At the bottom of the painting, where the wall ends and the floor begins, there is a strip of cobblestone, as though this is also a lace border that surrounds the building and embraces this broken family.

TOWN Council:
PRAIA DO RIBATEJO

Location:
Rua Dr. Francisco
Sá Carneiro, Praia
do Ribatejo

GPS:
Latitude 39.46594249
Longitude -8.35505962



Ausência (Absence), Violant w/ Senior University, Praia do Ribatejo, 2019.

I think this is a very important project: it brings more people to the towns and the route helps establish a connection between the works.

Benjamim Reis, chairman of the Praia do Ribatejo town council, 66 years.

⑨

Mãos de Arrais

Boatman's Hands

Author:
Carlos Vicente

The arrival of the railway, in the mid-19th century, slowed down the region's port activities as a transport route to Lisbon – many pottery items were shipped from here –, but the boat and the boatman kept fulfilling their role, even acting as a bridge between the two riverbanks, with the towns of Tancos to the north, and Arripiado to the south. Sail boats or row boats, even barges that carried two trucks, with vehicles loaded using a timer so they wouldn't sink the vessel's bow. These boats were driven by a single boatman, who had to use the full strength of his arms to push the barge to the other side of the river, using only a pole that he would move and press along the riverbed as he went forward.

That was the tribute Carlos Vicente wanted to make, in this case to his grandfather, who was a boatman in Tancos. He remembers being held and embraced by the sturdiness of those arms

as a child. Mãos de Arrais (*Boatman's Hands*) are his grandfather's hands. The boatman was a very important figure in the town, students depended on him to get to school, people who needed to get to work. On the EDP Distribuição secondary substation in Tancos, beside the railway line, one of the façades features a large drawing of two hands holding part of a pole. The hands are drawn simply with black lines, like a sketch, conferring extra strength, a powerful force, to those hands.



On another side of the substation, a figure is drawn, a regular reference in other works by Carlos Vicente, someone who greatly influenced the artist and who he honours here. "[Burne] Hogarth represents a person with 10 arms, as though he was showing the sequence of movements in a single image",

he states. "And I find that very interesting." On the right wall, a full body of a boatman is portrayed, bald, shirtless, trousers rolled up over his knees. His body is tilted, because of the force he is exerting on the pole, which is taller than him and bent. The boat is not represented, but his feet are touching a light blue strip, horizontal, drawn along the base of the substation, followed by some geometric shapes and, finally, a black section. It's as if the boat is the secondary substation, being moved by the boatman. Beside the pole, also resting on the light blue strip, there's a crow which, in this region, is also called 'vicente'. Finishing the works with a black border along the bottom, is a trademark of Carlos Vicente's work for EDP foundation Public Art – Artejo. All his other works are also finished with a black strip, varying only in the height he gives them. In this specific case, the artist also painted the columns that support the handrails leading to the substation, in black and light blue, and the stairs in dark blue. As if the work deserved a special entrance.

TOWN Council:
TANCOS

Location:
Rua da Cabine,
Tancos

GPS:
Latitude 39.46005739
Longitude -8.3984524



Mãos de Arrais (Boatman's Hands), Carlos Vicente, Tancos, 2018.

I think it looks nice. It's a way for the artists to express themselves and get more work.
Luís Morgado, retired, 70 years.

10

Noah, o Barqueiro

Noah, the Boatman

Author:

Violant &
Carlos Vicente



There are two very different interpretations of a work, especially a large one like this Noah, o Barqueiro (*Noah, the Boatman*). Seen from above, from the road, this intervention by Violant and Carlos Vicente on the side wall of a former primary school in Tancos, looks like a foreground enforced on the scenery, the river Tagus on the horizon, crosswise, and the drawing showing a boatman in profile, carrying in his boat a wolf and a sheep. On his head, there's a cabbage. Past the river, on a hill, on the shore opposite Tancos, there's another village, Arripiado, the houses providing a pixelized image of whites on green.

"I went to this primary school. My teacher was

old-fashioned", recounts Carlos Vicente. "At school, there were always two duties: to talk about the importance of the boatmen, who connect the two riverbanks, who take and bring information; and to meet the coming swallows." That was the teacher who told the riddle in class of the boatman who had to carry a wolf, a sheep and a cabbage to the other shore and, since he could only transport one at a time, had to find a way not to lose any of them. In other words: the wolf could eat the sheep and the sheep could eat the cabbage. "This riddle was just the starting point for the work", explains Violant, the other author of Noah, o Barqueiro. "Actually, Noah eliminates the riddle, by putting them all in the same boat. He didn't leave anyone behind.



The goal was also to convey a message of unity among all animals." This was the first work executed by Violant. "Because it was the first, created in partnership with Carlos, I thought it would be nice to have something more light-hearted. It's not a corrosive work like the others I did for Edp foundation Public Art –

Artejo", he states. "This work is more polished; it tries to reach the older population. Therefore, I tried to reconcile that approval with the river, giving the work breadth through its name."

Seen up close, there are several details in the piece that become more visible, like the fish, here represented flying, rather than in the riverbed. In the right-hand corner of the image, there's also an owl flying, a symbol of wisdom that evokes everything that was once taught within the four walls of this building. The river water leaves the wall and invades the ground. "I thought it worked. The water flows visually and I think it turned out really well", mentions Violant. "Furthermore, it helps create a barrier and protects the work." There's also a crocodile. "There's a story to the crocodile", tells Carlos Vicente. "Some time ago there was news that a crocodile had appeared in the Castelo de Bode dam. It turned out to be a huge catfish." The artists decided to include that "news", from 2011, in this story. Or is this not an era marked by fake news?



TOWN Council:
TANCOS

Location:
Rua da Misericórdia,
Tancos

GPS:
Latitude 39.45891013
Longitude -8.39964867



Noah, o Barqueiro (Noah, the Boatman), Violant & Carlos Vicente, Tancos, 2018.

For us it's an asset. We receive a lot of visits because of the castle, but many people come looking for the paintings, people stop their cars and photograph the works.

Ana Paula Gonçalves, secretary at the Tancos town council, 54 years.

11

Vertigo

Author:
Violant

If we look suddenly at **his** work by Violant on the side wall of Vila Nova da Barquinha's Loja do Cidadão (*Citizen's Office*), which also lends its space to the Para-clube Boínas Verdes (*Green Beret Par-achuting club*), we could be looking at, in drawing format, a frame from the Martin Scorsese film *Wolf of Wallstreet* (2013), which addresses the financial crisis of 2008, provoked by the wild capitalism that took hold of New York stockbrokers.



Here, and using the fact that a parachuting club operates from this building, Violant portrays a businessman falling from the sky, without a parachute, money bills flying everywhere from

an open briefcase. In the background, represented in a square pattern below, a city is seen from above – the roofs, streets, roads, roundabouts, small green spaces. There is the surrealistic detail of a clock facing upwards, marking five past nine. The flying money is 200- and 500-euro bills – these last having recently been taken out of circulation.



In freefall, the man stretches out one of his hands, as though he is asking someone to catch him and save him from misfortune. That someone could be us. "This figure in a suit and tie represents a **white-collar** worker, who is part of a hierarchical system where the purpose is money", explains Violant. Money isn't the means, it's the goal, the end.

"This man is in a situation where money has lost its value", he states. "Since the work is located on the wall of a parachuting club, I decided to use the theme of falling to conceive this image, which

has a cinematic character." The surface has various sections, it's comprised of various ledges. "The wall creates a kind of folding screen and the falling scenario ended up being the most interesting way to use this."



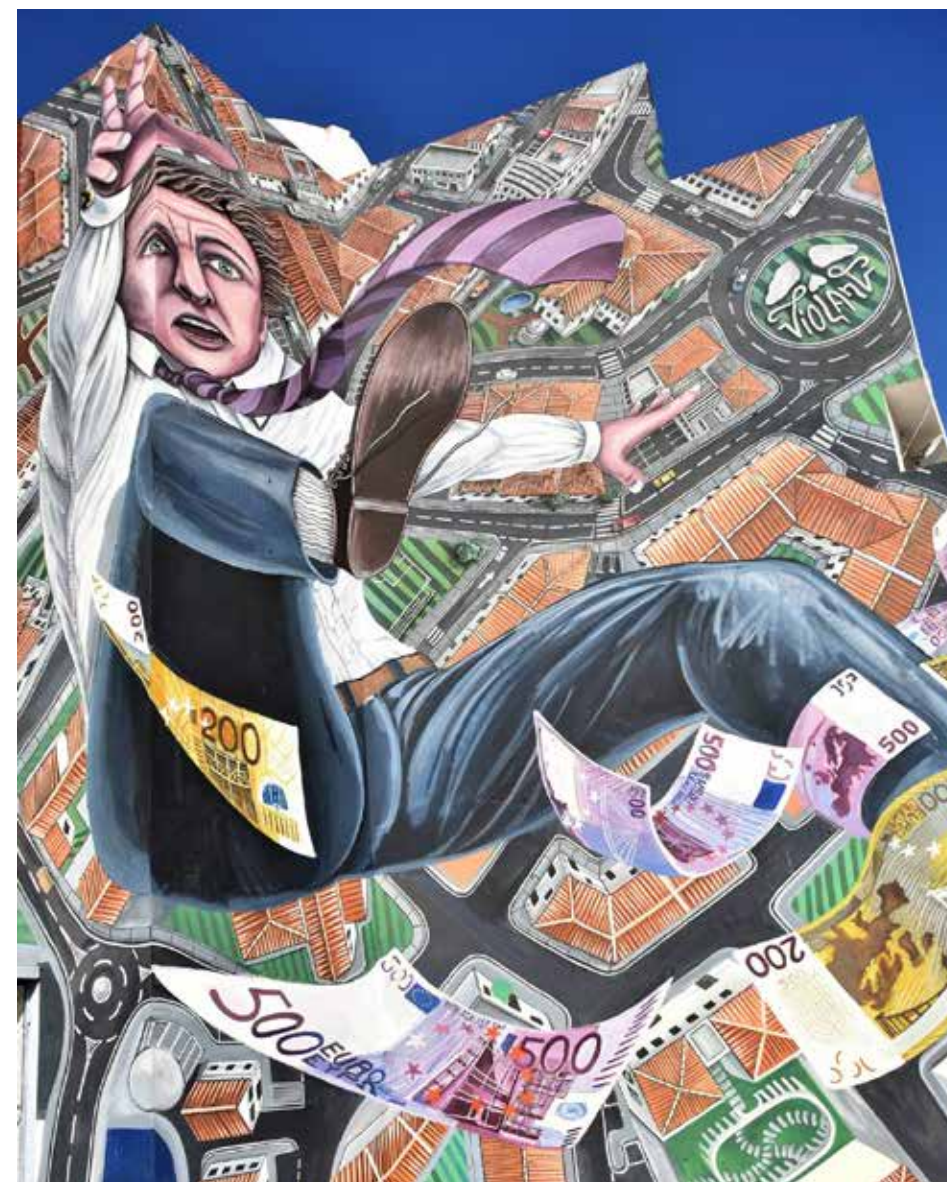
Violant mentions that the work was well received by the population. Even when he was painting it, cars would stop, take photos and stay to watch him work for a while. They would offer him snacks, water, coffee, beer. This is common when he works and it was no different in Vila Nova da Barquinha.

The title of this piece, *Vertigo*, may refer to the feeling of vertigo – and sudden deafness – which can affect the middle ear. But it may also be a character from Marvel Comics: a native from the Savage Land that gained superhuman powers that enable him to mentally torture people until making them unconscious. *Vertigo* could be a good metaphor for money.

TOWN Council:
VILA NOVA DA
BARQUINHA

Location:
Travessa de Angola

GPS:
Latitude 39.45828058
Longitude -8.43042626



Vertigo, Violant, Vila Nova da Barquinha, 2018.

There are some nice works and they attract tourists, along with Almourol castle and the Knights Templar Interpretation Centre.

Carlos Lourenço, bus driver, 38 years.

Edp foundation Public Art

**Route MÉDIO TEJO
Project ARTEJO**

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A special thanks to all of those who participated in the community meetings and supported the artists during the execution of their works in the towns of Atalaia, Praia do Ribatejo, Tancos and Vila Nova da Barquinha.



“Through this programme, the edp foundation helps bring rural communities into closer contact with art, while also provoking reflection on its role in society. Furthermore, it has additional merit: to reconcile within a single programme the edp foundation’s two key fields of intervention: social innovation and culture. This is a project that mobilises artists and rural communities in an innovative dialogue that will result in an unexpected public art route and a source of pride for all parties involved.”

Miguel Coutinho

Managing director and CEO of edp foundation

Minho

Braga
Crespos e Pousada
Padim da Graça
Merelim (São Paio)
Panoias
e Parada de Tibães
Palmeira

Ribatejo

Rio Maior
Vila da Marmeleira
Assentiz
São João da Ribeira
Ribeira de São João

Alto Alentejo

Campo Maior
Degolados
Ouguela

Trás-os- -Montes

Alfândega da Fé
Torre de Moncorvo
Miranda do Douro
Mogadouro

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Vila Nova da Barquinha
Atalaia
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Tancos

Algarve

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