

74-14 SAAL AND ARCHITECTURE

Proceedings

International Colloquium 74-14 SAAL and Architecture

Symposium SAAL: Retrospective

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The symposium 'SAAL: A Retrospective' was organized on the occasion of the exhibition 'The SAAL Process: Architecture and Participation, 1974-1976' at the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto, Portugal, from 1 November 2014 to 1 February 2015. The exhibition travelled to the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal, Canada, from 12 May to 4 October 2015.

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74-14 SAAL and ARCHITECTURE: an introduction

José António Bandeirinha | Delfim Sardo |
Gonçalo Canto Moniz

Editors

The book *74-14 SAAL and Architecture* is the result of two events held in Porto and Coimbra in 2014, in the context of the 40th anniversary of SAAL – Serviço Ambulatório de Apoio Local [Local Ambulatory Support Service] –, the housing process that took place after the Portuguese revolution, between 1974 and 1976.

The Serralves Foundation, the Centre for Social Studies and the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra developed a partnership to promote the “Symposium SAAL: A Retrospective” (Porto, May 2014) and the “International Colloquium 74-14 SAAL and Architecture” (Coimbra, November 2014), with the support of DOCOMOMO International and 25 of April Documentation Centre. Scholars, architects, and the SAAL residents joined together to celebrate and to rethink this historical moment of the Portuguese society.

In fact, the goal of these events was to discuss SAAL, as an historical model, according to contemporary circumstances. Today, SAAL allows us to reflect, to question and to debate the issues and challenges of housing as well as its close relationship with architecture. Between 1974 and 1976, SAAL emerged as a

decentralized and non-bureaucratic service, in a tri-party complex relationship between the state, poor residents and architects. It generated housing. It produced an important reflection about the city and its planning processes. And it made possible the practice of architecture under a strong revolutionary tension.

The set of papers organized in this book reflect on the contemporary experiences contained in this historical process. On one hand, it also redefines the outlines of today contexts and, on the other hand, it observes the constraints of the differences.

This reflection is based on five converging and interrelated layers, hoping that, an expansion of the points of view contained in each of these perspectives, may contribute to a more complete overview of the subject.

74 -14 SAAL # RETROSPROPECTIVE ARCHITECTURE

The SAAL process revisited by some of its protagonists, connecting the facts with the stories, the ideals with the design problems,

the policies with the residents dreams and necessities.

74-14 SAAL # PORTUGUESE ARCHITECTURE

The importance of SAAL for the transformation of Portuguese architecture and for its contemporary moment. In fact, architectural production in Portugal became internationalized with SAAL, and at particular moments even gained the attention of European architectural criticism. Nevertheless, within Portugal, it never ceased to have a residual importance in the political and administrative framework of local governance.

74-14 SAAL # AUTONOMOUS ARCHITECTURE

The third section will focus on the complex fabric of relationships and interdependencies between architecture and order, and, the more relevant case, between architecture and power. Given its complex and intertwined interaction between poles – contractor, architect, user – SAAL is an ideal opportunity to reflect on the livelihood of the idea of an autonomous architecture in the face of the extreme preponderance of these poles.

74-14 SAAL # INCLUSIVE ARCHITECTURE

The fourth section will reflect on how SAAL came to focus on opportunities for socially enrooting the idea of housing in urban areas

with the right to the city. The process of the residents' movement in the 1970s in Portugal, particularly involving the SAAL process, represents a rich historical moment in building a more inclusive idea of the city – involving the poorest residents, on one hand, and enabling these communities to have access to build their own idea of the city, on the other. So, how can we draw parallels with contemporary global reality?

74-14 SAAL # TRANSRELATIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Finally, there is the growing consideration that SAAL brought for the breadth of disciplinary interactions on methodological tensions of architectural practice. Today, more than ever, we must reflect on these historical tensions.