



21st Century Rural Museum, Mude - Museum of Design and Fashion of Lisbon, May 16th to September 1st, 2013.

<http://www.21stcenturyruralmuseum.com>

Partner 6: Museu Nacional de Arqueologia, Portugal > Mário Antas

1. Exhibition Concept

Based on the case study of Idanha-a-Nova, Portuguese settlement located on the border with Spain - *Raia* - and birthplace of the architect and researcher Cristina Rodrigues, the project **21st Century Rural Museum** is an itinerant exhibition that seeks to bring urban environments, Portuguese, and not only, the current rural affected by desertification and economic decline. Based on the handicraft of Idanha-a-Nova, Portuguese and English artists create diverse artistic pieces that represent their vision of that world, in an attempt to include the public in the debate about the importance of rural regeneration: *"This exhibition has been designed for the general public with the aim of renewing the sense of citizenship and to involve everyone in the discussion."*

The exhibition **21st Century Rural Museum** is structured around several expository types - installations, photography, sculpture - constructing a narrative that tells the tales of the rural world (that pass between generations verbally) to the urban world, where this universe no longer exists, using elements of traditional Portuguese culture to the present.



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2. Reception

The exhibition **21st Century Rural Museum**, displayed in MUDE - Museum of Design and Fashion of Lisbon, has free entry, so it is not possible to evaluate the exact number of visitors. It should be noted, however, that this exhibition also features an itinerant character, having been wholly or partially displayed in diversified public spaces such as fairs or patrimonial buildings, like the Sé Catedral de Idanha (Cathedral of Idanha).

3. Exhibition Design

Due to the underlying concept of this project, it is not a closed itinerant exhibition set, but a collection whose works of art adapt to the existing space and presentation / installation may vary, i.e., they can be exposed individually or accompanied by other effects such as music, in fairs or monuments, in addition to Museum rooms. The pieces in the exhibition assume very distinct characteristics, such as photography, painting, acrylic, metal or glass sculpture, installations with sound and visual effects, among others. The general idea of this project - **21st Century Rural Museum** - can be assessed through visits to the different exhibitions or on the project's website.

4. Visitors Approach - Activation/Participation

According to the type of the exhibition, the visitor's approach can be very different: in a fair there's more interactivity with the authors; in a monument, in which a particular piece may be accompanied by a musical show, the visitor's interaction may be more passive, as well as the exhibition. The visitor is invited to participate with reviews, suggestions or photos, through "social media" such as Facebook or Pinterest. The exhibits may accompany or join in cycles of conferences about the base topic of this *virtual museum*.

The 21st Century Rural Museum seeks through art produced by an interdisciplinary and international team, to debate a problem of a particular area in Portugal (desertification and economic decline), but common to many countries. Starting from the handicrafts and cultural traditions of an interior, and border zone, works of art are conceived which are presented in various venues, such as fairs or exhibition centers in cities. It is a museum whose dynamism results from adaptation to existing space and interaction with the different agents involved



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5. Conclusion: the temporary exhibition 21st Century Rural Museum, Mude (Museum of Design and Fashion of Lisbon), in respect to the COP1 and COP2.

Toolkit 1 - Making Europe visible. In this virtual and itinerant museum, one seeks to articulate the artists' vision from various countries about the Portuguese countryside, presenting it in different rural and urban spaces, national and international.

Toolkit 2 - The Museum as a 'social arena'. Because it is a virtual museum, displaying the pieces can be done in several different ways: some pieces/installations can count with the participation of artists (musicians) that interact with the pieces exhibited. The inhabitants of the study area are themselves participants in the exhibition, either through "object"/model represented, repository of memories and basis for new artistic approaches, or as active participants (musicians). The central theme of this virtual museum seeks to awaken attention to wider issues such as desertification and the loss of traditional memory (or conservation efforts of the same) using the museum as a repository vehicle of traditions/memories and discussion space.

Toolkit 3 - Bridging-the-gap. Counting with the active participation of the population in a specific area, and participating with some works of art in more traditional events, such as fairs, it seeks to take to the non-visitors audiences, a new matrix of museum and art. In addition to these initiatives, the strict relationship between the handicraft and traditional object, like the tambourine, tends to reach a wider audience in the rural world. The use of Web tools allows to reach different audiences, seeking to attract attention to the virtual museum and the discussion of today's issues.

Toolkit 4 - synaesthetic translation and transformation of contents. Artifacts used in everyday life or in parties such as tambourines, as well as traditional songs, are the target of new reinterpretations, worked with social actors who are the repository of these traditions. Through new perspectives and interpretations, usual everyday objects gain a new understanding and awake a renewed attention to handicraft pieces, common or fallen into disuse, which in another context could be considered as works of art.

Toolkit 5 - Social interaction with web and new media. Part of the museum works in the virtual world, having a strong Web component impact. Artist's interview videos and articles, about the exhibition, or a virtual visit can be found at:

<http://www.21stcenturyruralmuseum.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/21stCenturyRuralMuseum>

<http://pinterest.com/21strural/> <http://www.youtube.com/user/21stRural?feature=mhee>

<http://21stcenturyruralmuseum.wordpress.com/> <http://www.mude.pt/Temp/museuRural/museuRuralPT.html>

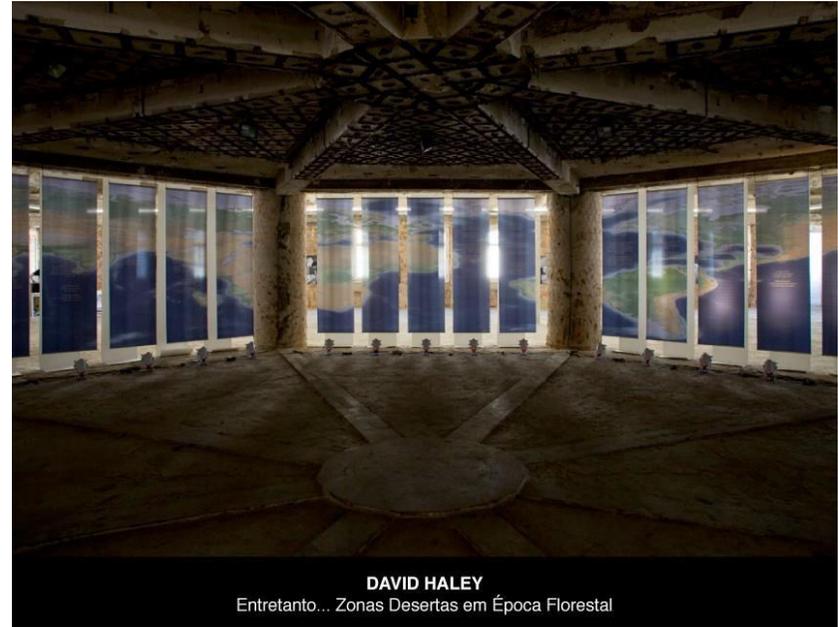


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21st Century Rural Museum - Opening in MUDE, Lisbon.
(<http://pinterest.com/21strural/>)



DAVID HALEY
Entretanto... Zonas Desertas em Época Florestal

21st Century Rural Museum - Opening in MUDE, Lisbon
(<http://www.mude.pt/Temps/museuRural/museuRuralPT.html>)



The Manta --- MUDE, Lisbon *The Manta* --- 17th Raiana fair,
Idanha---a---Nova, Castelo Branco
(<http://www.21stcenturyruralmuseum.com>)
(<http://www.21stcenturyruralmuseum.com>)





The Manta --- Cathedral of Idanha---a---Nova Installation 'The People's Wall' - black & white portraits, music and the Adufe, Castelo Branco (Portugal). (A local musical instrument) at Guangdong Museum of Art, as part of the exhibition 'Issues of Urbanization', curated by Tongyu Zhou.

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