The Ragpicker's Journal

Dan Brackenbury

## FOREWORD

This is a visual journal which details the creative process of *The Ragpicker's Topology*, a practice-based PhD by Dan Brackenbury.

The enquiry was situated within the context of three urban markets in Portugal, each experiencing different aspects of renewal: Mercado de Arroios in Lisbon, Mercado do Bolhão in Porto and Mercado dos Lavradores in Funchal.

Extensive photographic surveys of these sites, involving numerous investigative photo-walks, took place over a period of three years. Gordon Cullen's *Townscape* (1961) was used as a map of signifiers to guide the process and help locate details which contributed towards the 'character' of these locations.

The journal is split into three sections: Part I is a bricolage of Cullen's original visual precedents for characterful urban form, combined with contemporary photographic responses found within each of the markets. The images from Cullen's original work are in black and white and the photographs taken for this project are in colour.

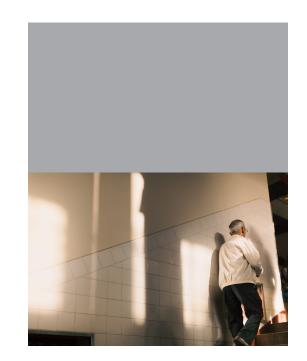
Part II is a new series of images, which are intended to expand-upon and compliment the casebook in *Townscape* (1961). Cullen's photographic precedents were arranged under the headings of *Place*, *Content* and *Functional Tradition*. This new section, *Mise-en-Scène*, explores accidental incidents of theatrically, performance and staging that emerged within each of the sites.

Part III documents the process of returning these images to their original setting by integrating them back into the fabric one of the markets. This was a series of projections that intended to celebrate the drama and vitality of each environment. They were exhibited early one weekday morning at Mercado dos Lavradores, shortly before trading began.

PLACE

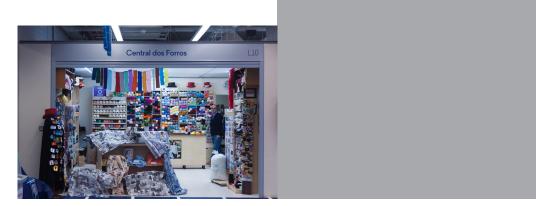








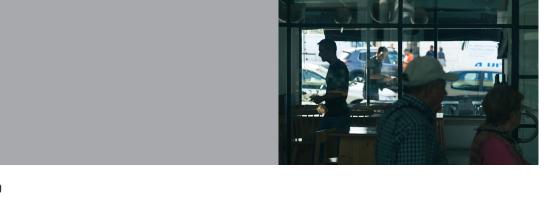
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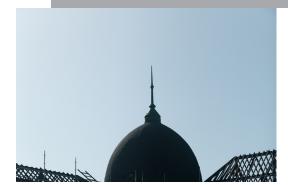






















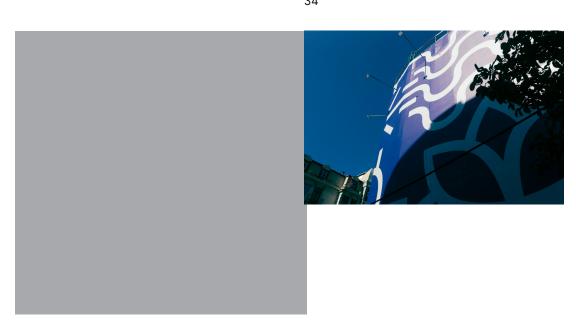






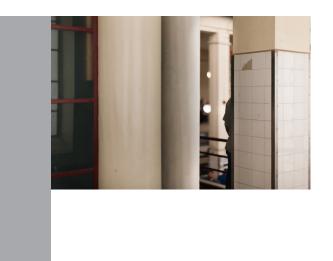








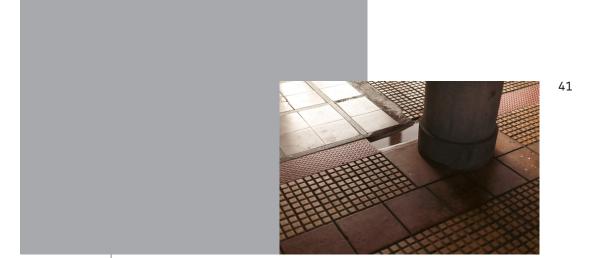














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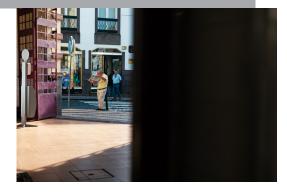


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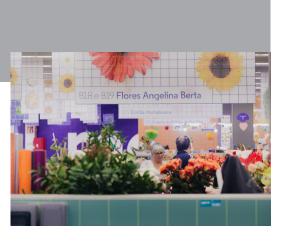










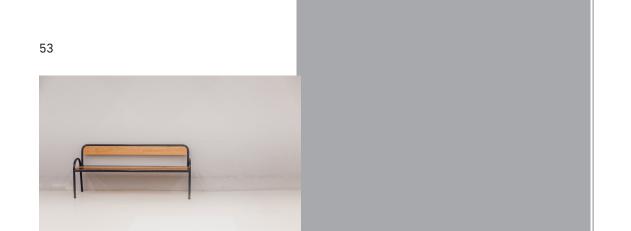




























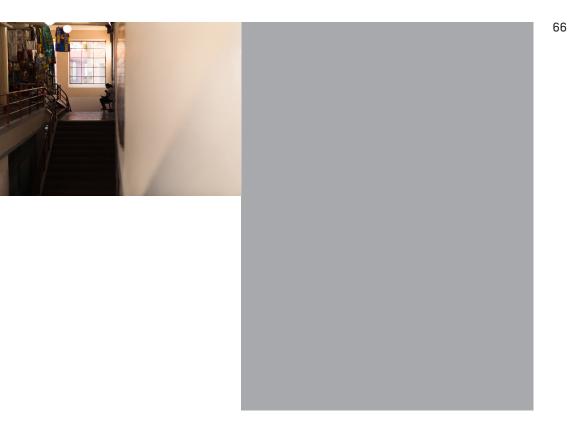














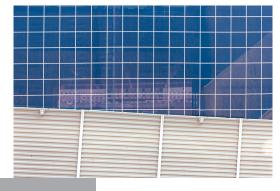








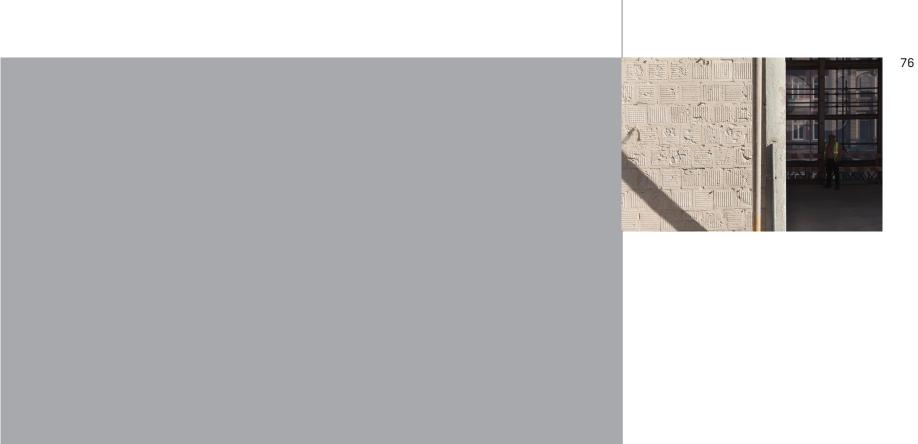




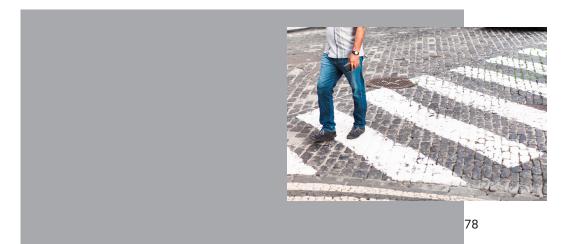












#### PLACE

"... we are dealing with a range of experience stemming from the major impacts of exposure and enclosure... There is, for instance, a typical emotional reaction to being below the general ground level and there is another resulting from being above it. There is a reaction to being hemmed in as in a tunnel and another to the wideness of the square. If, therefore, we design our towns from the point of view of the moving person... it is easy to see how the whole city becomes a plastic experience, a journey through pressures and vacuums, a sequence of exposures and enclosures, of constraint and relief."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 9-10

#### 1. Possession

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"since most people do just what suits them when it suits them, we find that [space] is colonised for social and business purposes," Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 21

#### 2. Occupied territory Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Shade, shelter, amenity and convenience are the usual causes of possession. The emphasising of such places by some... indication serves to create an image of the various kinds of occupation" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 23

### 3. Possession in movement Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...static possession is only one aspect of the human grip on the out-of-doors and the next stage is to consider possession in movement... a definite thing having a well- defined beginning and end with a well-defined character; and this may be possessed while moving through it..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 23

#### 4. Advantage

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019 "...there are lines of advantage which can be colonised; the line along the parapet of a bridge which people seem to prefer for the sake of the immediacy of its view and position is one such" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 24

5. Viscosity

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 24

"Where there is a mixture of static possession and possession in movement we find what may be termed viscosity, the formation of groups chatting, of slow window-shoppers, people selling newspapers, flowers and so on."

6. Enclaves

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"The enclave or interior open to the exterior and having free and direct access from one to the other is seen here as an accessible place or room out of the main directional stream..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 25

#### 7. Enclosure

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"Enclosure... is the basic unit of the precinctual pattern; outside, the noise and speed of impersonal communication which comes and goes but is not of any place."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 25

#### 8. Focal point

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"In the fertile streets and market places of town and village it is the focal point... which crystallises the situation, which confirms 'this is the spot'. 'Stop looking, it is here"

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 26

#### 9. Precincts

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019 "...the whole urban pattern as it was and to some extent still is. Inside is the tightly built-up pedestrian town with its enclosures and no doubt areas of viscosity, its focal points and enclaves. Outside are the expressways for car and lorry, train and ship which exist to serve and vitalize the precincts." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 26

10. Indoor landscape and outdoor room Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"the natural corollary that if the outdoors is colonised then the people who do this will attempt to humanise the landscape in just the same way they already do for the interiors. At this point we can find little difference between the two" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 27

11. The outdoor room and enclosure Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Enclosure or the outdoor room is, perhaps, the most powerful, the most obvious, of all the devices to instil this sense of position, of identity with the surroundings. It embodies the idea of hereness..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 28

12. Multiple enclosure Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"...separate enclosures combined into one interpenetrating whole."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 29

13. Block house Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"... [it] blocks... and so draws a momentary balance between enclosure and pure fluidity. It does not impede the flow... but acts as a mark of punctuation or closure."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 30

14. Insubstantial place Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"By dissolving the walls of enclosure with either screen, mirror or illusion, an intangible space is created which seems to have the property of receding as one advances and closing up behind. The sense of space... exists throughout like a scent which hovers in a particular place."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 31

15 Defining space Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"It is sometimes astonishing how fragile can be the means of establishing enclosure or space. A wire stretched from wall to wall like a pencil stroke, a square of canvas stretched out overhead... it achieves that evocative charm of containing whilst revealing what is beyond" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 32

16. Looking out of enclosure Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"Having established the fact of Hereness, the feeling of identity with a place, it is clear that this cannot exist of itself but must automatically create a sense of Thereness, and it is in the manipulation of these two qualities that the spatial drama of relationship is set up."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 33

17. Thereness Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"Thereness which is lyrical in the sense that it is perpetually out of our reach, it is always There. " Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 34

18. Here and there Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...is concerned with the interplay between a known here and a known there... we are looking... into another place whose individuality, direction and character is unequivocally stated..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 35

19. Looking into enclosure Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"Anything that may be occupied by oneself or by one's imagination... They draw us outwards" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 36

20. Pinpointing Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"What is this mystery of the commonplace? Even the most ordinary means can be harnessed to the task of arousing in us the sense of otherness through the use of light, through pointing the finger. It is not the thing pointed out but the evocative act of pointing that arouses the emotions." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 37

21. Truncation Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"...the two things, foreground and distance, are brought into dramatic juxtaposition... this effect neatly juxtaposes the near and the distant." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 37

22. Change of level Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Any account of one's emotional reactions to position must include the subject of levels. Below level produces intimacy, inferiority, enclosure and claustrophobia, above level gives exhilaration, command, superiority, exposure and vertigo..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 38

23. Netting Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"...this serves to link the near with the remote.... making us see in detail through having such detail brought to our attention through the act of netting" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 39

24. Silhouette

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"...seek[s] to entrap the space... the tracery, the filigree, the openwork ridge capping all serve to net the sky, so that as the building soars up into the blue vault it also captures it and brings it down to the building."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 40

25. Screened vista Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...the sense of Hereness is increased by the screen of foliage and the outside world made correspondingly remote."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 41

26. Handsome gesture Near the Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"Considering that so much of urban landscape consists of the quiet... the simple backwater, the humdrum and ordinary, it is perhaps useful to utilise to the full what local talent there is, as this modest little scene shows."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 42

27. Closed vista Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"...the closed vista, which puts a building down and then invites you to step back and admire it... is yet capable of infinite adaptation." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 43

28. Deflection

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"...the object... is deflected away from the right angle, thus arousing the expectation that it is doing this to some purpose, i.e. that there is a place... yet unseen... deflection arouses the thought." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 43

29. Projection and recession Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...the eye... is caught up in the intricacy of the mean-

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 44

30. Incident

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"The value of incident is to entrap the eye so that it does not slide out into the beyond with resulting boredom... it is a nudge." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 44

31. Punctuation Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"If the vista seems like a complete sentence containing subject and predicate, the use of the word punctuation may clarify those demarcations of the enclosed phrase... In the continuing narrative... function and pattern change from place to place; this should be acknowledged by some physical signal." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 45

32. Narrows Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"an unavoidable nearness of detail, which is in direct contrast to the wide piazza, square or promenade, and by the use of such narrows it is possible to maintain enclosure without forbidding the passage..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 45

33. Fluctuation

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"Fluctuation... is the stimulation of our sense of position through moving from the wide to the narrow and out again into some fresh space." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 46

34. Undulation

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"Undulation is not just an aimless wiggly line; it is the compulsive departure from an unseen axis or norm; and its motive is delight in such proofs and essences of life as light and shade... or nearness and distance... like the same thought expressed in several different wavs."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 46

35. Closure Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Closure... is the creation of a break... which, whilst containing the eye, does not block out the sense of progression beyond"

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 47

36. Recession

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...a scene which for some odd reason fails to fall into perspective."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 48

37. Anticipation Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...suspicion as to what scene will meet our eyes..." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 49

38. Infinity

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"...ways in which the solitude and vastness of the sky can be made personal to us... a shock which changes sky into infinity."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 50

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39. Mystery Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...we glimpse the unknown, the mystery of a city where anything could happen or exist, the noble or the sordid, genius or lunacy..."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 51

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40. The maw

Near Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"Black, motionless and silent, like a great animal with infinite patience, the maw observes nonchalant people passing to and fro... This is the unknown which utter blackness creates."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 52

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41. Linking and joining: the floor Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Buildings, rich in texture and colour, stand on the floor. If the floor is a smooth and flat expanse of greyish tarmac then the buildings will remain separate because the floor fails to intrigue the eye... One of the most powerful agents for unifying and joining... is the floor..."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 53

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42. Pedestrian ways Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"The pedestrian network links... together in a viable pattern: it links place to place by steps, bridge and distinctive floor pattern, or by any means possible so long as continuity and access are maintained. Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 54

#### CONTENT

"...we can manipulate the nuances of scale and style, of texture and colour and of character and individuality, juxtaposing them in order to create collective benefits. In fact the environment thus resolves itself into not conformity but the interplay of This and That. It is a matter of observation that... not only do we experience the harmony released but, equally, the colours become more truly themselves."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 11

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43. Juxtaposition Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...the direct relationship between two categories...
The unequivocal character of both is brought sharply together, there is no fluffing..."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 60

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44. Immediacy

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"... we long for the direct contact of immediacy, whether it be the edge of water or the edge of height." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 61

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45. Thisness

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...a thing being itself... That character may be rich and very variously expressed..."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 62

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46. Seeing in detail

Near Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"By attention to detail, by training the eye to see in detail, the manmade world starts to grow in interest and quality. Small elements like this seem to have a life of their own."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 63

47. Urbanity

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...sums up the whole character and quality of urban life, proportion, elegance, high density..."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 64

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48. Intricacy

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"...the quality of intricacy absorbs the eye. It is an extra dimension..."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 65

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49. Propriety

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"Propriety... retains the sense of property... Propriety never seeks to stifle, rather is it self- expression within a civilised framework." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 65

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50. Bluntness and vigour

Near the Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"we can sense a force which survives or bursts through... Such buildings stand like rocks." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 66

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51. Entanglement Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"...entangled in a bunch of intricacy and wonder... like a visual conundrum."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 67

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52. Nostalgia

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"...the luxuriant creeper on the wall tosses and surges, but behind the glass in the dimly lit and silent room the solitary plant grows alone." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 68 53. Exposure

Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"Emptiness, a great expanse... geometry... some of the elements that create the feeling of exposure."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 69

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54. Intimacy

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...the inward life of intimacy and cordiality. There is here a bright and blooming human vigour." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 69

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55. Illusion

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"based on the bluff that This is That." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 70

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56. Metaphor

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Not quite so brazenly cheeky as illusion is the Metaphor which only hints that This is That, but there is great scope here for the power of suggestion." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 70

57. The tell-tale

Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"Certain objects possess the quality of being evocative and absolutely unmistakable."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 72

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58. Animism

Near Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Again the assertion, This is That, can be seen in examples of animism, the suggestion that a door is a face and, more directly, that a window is a mouth, can sometimes induce a sense of strangeness..."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 72

59. Noticible absence Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Those effects in which the significant object is omitted..."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 73

60. Significant objects

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"Common objects often achieve distinction by reason of their self-contained force as sculpture..."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 73

61. Building as sculpture Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"From time to time buildings (which normally observe the conventions and fit into the landscape as architecture) emerge as another art, and to the extent that they do this they achieve a fresh significance due to the different standards to be applied."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 74

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62. Geometry

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"...imbues the landscape with its scale, detachment and austerity, rather as the appearance of the head-master in a school classroom can change a chattering, restless and giggling group of jolly children into a serious and concentrating silence."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 75

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63. Multiple use Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"This and That can coexist... true living accepts the joys of togetherness..."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 76

64. Foils

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...the relation of these separate entities could result in the creation of urban drama... This marriage of opposites... succeeds because This is good for That. " Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 77

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65. Relationship

Near Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"...the kind of flowing rhythm that can be created between buildings...." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 78

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66. Scale

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"Scale is not size, it is the inherent claim to size... scales [are] intensified by being seen together, the big is bigger and the small smaller."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 79

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67. Distortion

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"By deliberately distorting the scale by giantism a shock is produced as of some sudden violence of nature or of unreality, whereas distortion by reduction produces the effect of a jewel-box." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 81

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68. Trees incorporated Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...the tree is.... accepted in its own right as a living organism which is pleased to dwell amongst us. In this way new relationships are possible between our own organic architecture and the natural structure."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 83

69. Calligraphy

Near Mercado do Bolhão temporary site, Porto, 2019

"...the slender and cursive ironwork is drawn on to the simple white walls creating a most precise and delicate foil"

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 84

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70. Publicity

Near Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...lettering which has its own charm and vitality as a foil to the street."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 85

71. Taming with tact Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"...intrusion... into the wilderness without vulgarity." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 86

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FUNCTIONAL TRADITION

"...the intrinsic quality of things made — structures, bridges, paving, lettering and trim — which create the environment... it is unequivocal, pithy and wonderfully economical."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 87

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72. Railings

Near Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...delicate lines drawn at danger points and not ponderous and stuffy barriers," Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 83

73. Fences

Mercado do Bolhão renovation site, Porto, 2019

"The function of a fence is to enclose property, to exclude unwanted people and animals."
Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 89

74. Steps

Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2020

"At any rate, in their context, they give a penetrating insight into the quality we are trying to isolate." Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 90

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75. Black and white Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2020

"... like a signal... The sheer vivacity and gaiety of black and white is... here by design and not by accident."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 91

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76. Texture
Mercado do Bolhão renovation site. Porto, 2019

"...texture here can be gladly accepted as a stimulation to be found in the ordinary scene" Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 92

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77. Lettering

Near Mercado de Arroios, Lisbon, 2019

"The truly functional typeface is the one that, properly spaced, makes its message clear from the distance at which it is intended to be read. It may be bold... alternatively... It may be trim, slim and well-formed when its message is secondary..."

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 83

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78. The road
Mercado dos Lavradores, Funchal, 2019

"...White letters painted on the road do not obstruct, and they site their messages in the spot most easy to see. In this satisfactory way the road takes over the nautical black and white"

Cullen, Townscape, 1961: 83

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Mise-en-Scène do Mercado

## Curtain raise

A threshold beckoning us forth, like a velvet curtain that is slightly open. A muffled hubbub can be heard drifting out, summoning the pedestrian to peer inside and explore the commotion unfolding within.



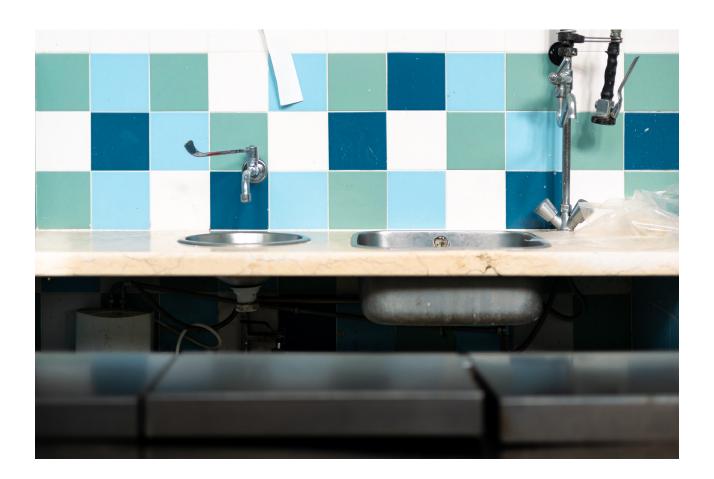
# Suspense

A chance moment of naturally occurring tension. Such events materialise frequently in cities but often happen just out of sight, concealed and unacknowledged.



# Backdrop

A vivid setting that adds a context, narrative and humanity to a scene, often appreciated best when the players have stepped aside.



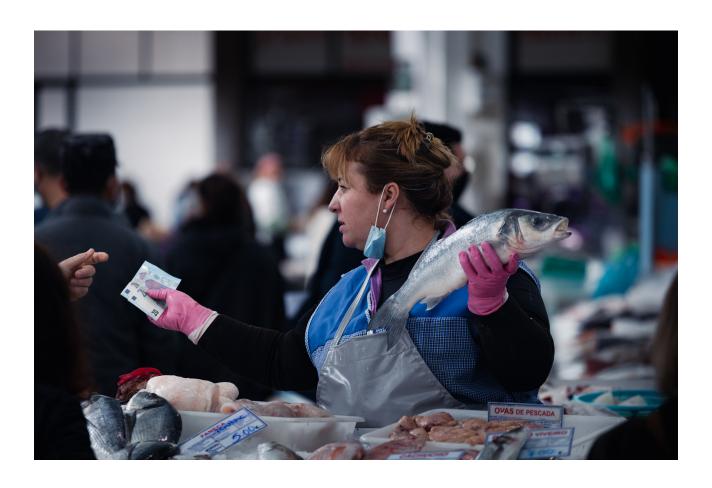
# Foreboding

A sense of fear or apprehension that something bad might happen. This is a heightened awareness of what is around us and the danger that those elements may pose.



# Cognoscente

The quiet, discerning deftness of an expert connoisseur who can gladly explain the specific qualities of goods on offer as well as their intrinsic values and significance.



#### Imminent reveal

The moment where an important object is about to appear, entering the narrative and altering the course of events moving forward.



# Poise

An elegant movement and grace that can be observed when a skilled craftsperson is carefully absorbed in their task at hand.



# Aftermath

The concise arrangement of one or two objects within a space that epigrammatically indicate a commotion has recently occurred.



# Aside

The moment when a lead character steps into a quiet nearby nook, where they can candidly express their views of the current situation in hushed tones.



## Inset

A scene within a scene or a set within a set. An arrangement of prudently organised items that result in a contained locale which exists independently of its wider surroundings.



# Adagio

A calm through-way that is pleasantly confined and hemmed in, tempering the cadence of human movement and slowing things down, fleetingly at least.



## Disorientation

An eye-catching surrounding that diverts you off-course into an unforeseen recess where a new set of orientations, routes and bearings are set out before you.



# Entr'acte

A momentary intermission that will pass very soon. When the encroaching bustle and buzz return, they will change the dynamic of this sleepy mood beyond recognition.



## Impasse

An environment which, in its current form, is so blocked-out and sealed shut that nothing noteworthy can transpire nearby. A complete full-stop.



# Confab

Markets are often a hive of interactions and exchanges, many of them jovial and informal. These happy interactions are what enliven such urban spaces, providing the bartering and beckoning of a community in conversation.



# Vacancy

This is the candid emptiness that occurs when people are absent from a setting that should be occupied. The action is clearly happening elsewhere and this austere scene provokes us to go and look for it.



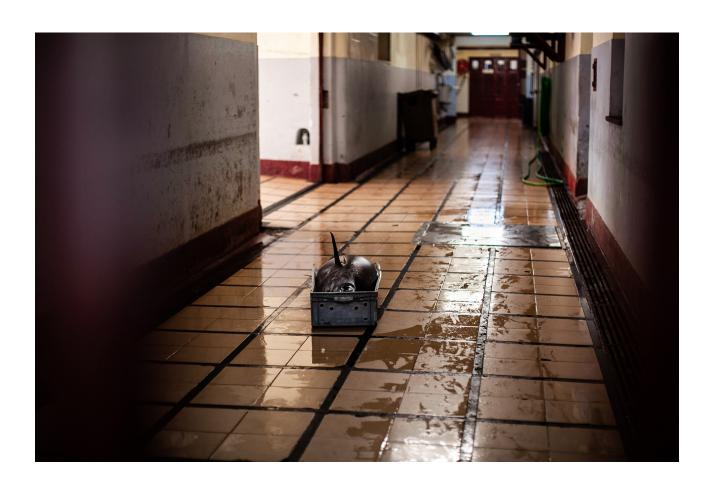
## Recital

A set of movements and actions that are almost musical in the way that they are performed. We, the audience, can observe without feeling inhibited and reflect upon the precision of the expertise on display.



# Clue

A sight that hints at a broader narrative, which might perhaps become more intelligible upon further investigation.



# Sightline

Sometimes a busy environment can open up in such a way that space collapses and we may find ourselves catching the eye of a distant stranger directly in our line of sight. It is as if the architecture itself has made the introduction.



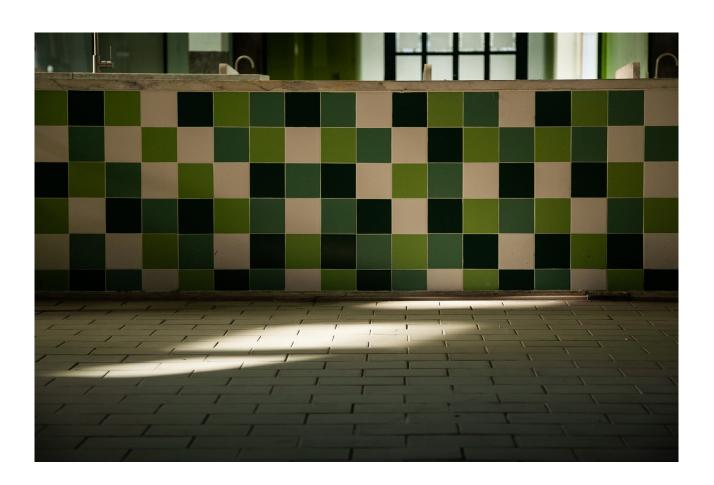
## Strike-down

The act of clearing out the scenery. Usually empty retail units are boarded up or covered with material to keep the light out. Occasionally there is a gap in this coverage, inviting us to peep in and take a quick glance at the vacant space, perhaps imagining how it once was, or how it might one day be inhabited.



# Preposition

A type of chance peacefulness, creating a sense of expectation and helping to set the scene for what is about to happen.



# Scope

The serendipitous arrangement of various framing elements that create a tunnel-like view from one environment into a tonally contrasting place. The perspective through these windows reveals the main character from an overheard anecdote told just out of earshot.



# Limbo

A strange illusory alcove in a recess beyond. A hypothetical and anomalous place, somewhat detached from time.



## Omniscience

The act of looking down from above, surveying the action unfolding below in a commanding manner where the broad view, along with our agency and imagination, provide the opportunity to call the shots on what takes place before us.



# Memento

A thing that is clearly significant to someone because it contains or refers to a story from the past.



## Astray

The coax of a corner not yet turned.



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The Mercado Projections







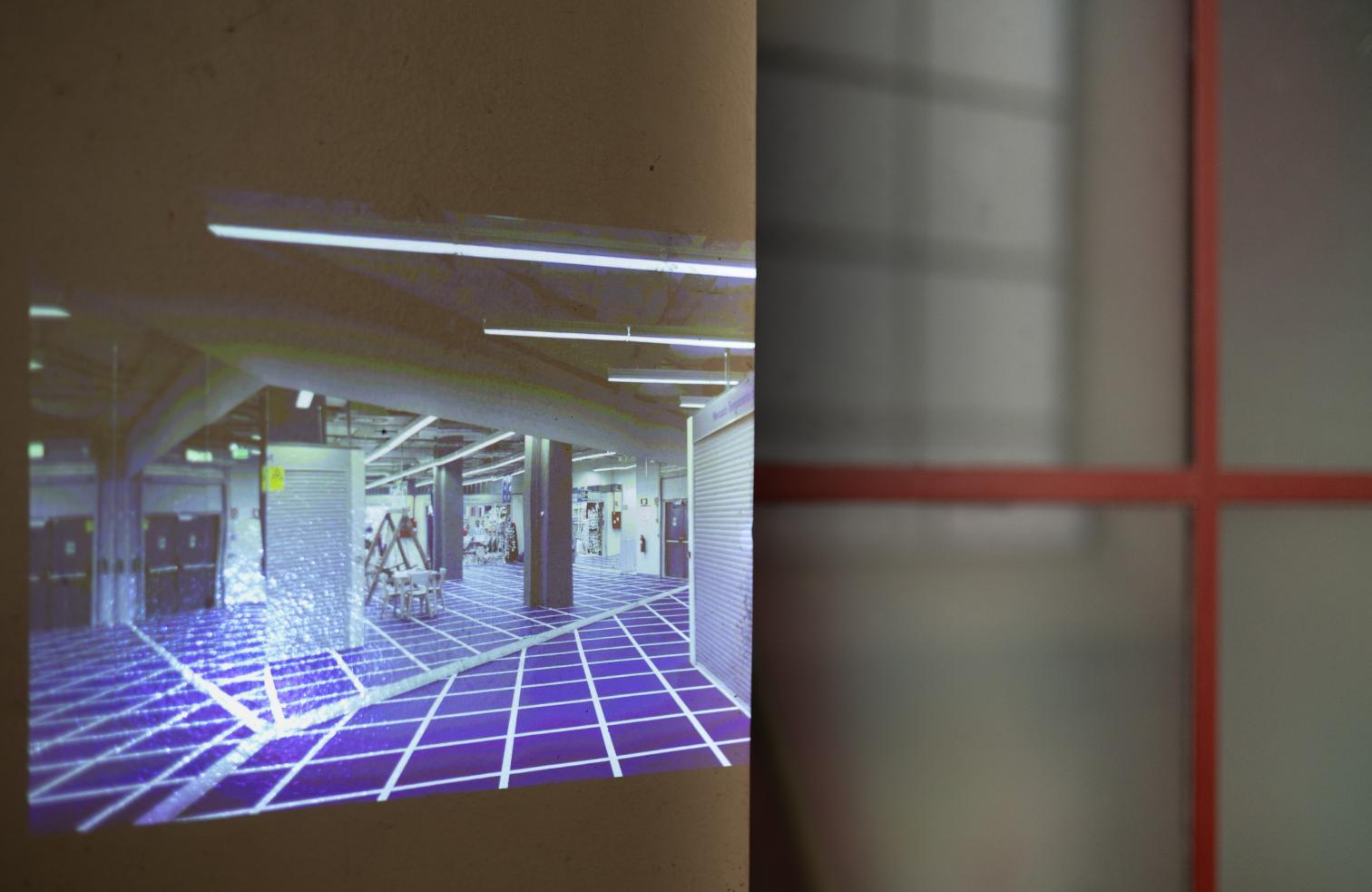


















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