

## RECOMMENDATION LETTER

I met Sofia Neuparth, director of c.e.m. (*centro em movimento*, center in motion) in a presentation that Associação Habita invited me to do in January 2015, which would start a cycle of debates that lasts until today, in the space of this association, now the space is called Sirigaita. There were several members of the c.e.m. also in the audience who intrigue me with their critical questions about the production of urban space. At the time, there was little talk of gentrification in Portugal and we were all trying to understand what was happening in the city of Lisbon and in other cities in the country in terms of urban regeneration.

A year later, in the constitution of the urban social movement Morar em Lisboa and in the elaboration of its open letter to our rulers, alerting to the accelerated touristification and gentrification that was advancing in the city, c.e.m integrated with us the many dozens of associations, collectives and movements that signed the open letter. They've been with us ever since.

In these almost 10 years that I know and attend c.e.m. I recognize its vital role in the development of artistic research and praxis of profusion of this knowledge, practices and reflections in an always fruitful interaction with different fields of knowledge. c.e.m. has been dedicated since the late 1980s to studies of the body and movement. At the heart of artistic research are dance and writing practices, but various performance practices that stimulate critical thinking and reflection on contemporary urban life. The mission of c.e.m. mirrored in all the initiatives it promotes, organizes and collaborates with is to practice Art and Culture as a form of Knowledge. Creating and nurturing spaces for interdisciplinary crossing and rescaling between people and ideas, with a view to enriching (non-commercial) critical thinking/discourse in contemporaneity and contemporary urban culture. Therefore, the c.e.m. constantly re-tunes its long-term strategy to contribute to the discussion of the Commons and use value (in detriment of exchange value) in urban space. Investing in the inseparability of theory and practice by promoting discussion and continued reflection both at the level of the core base of c.e.m. professionals and by insisting on conversations and debates open to diverse

audiences, it promotes many initiatives that stimulate action research. In this field, I would like to highlight the intense partnership work that they have developed with the Center for Geographical Studies of the Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning at the University of Lisbon, through the project CRIAR CORPO CRIAR CIDADE: a set of research seminars organized in partnership with the Ágora project: “Encounters between the City and the Arts: Exploring new Urbanities” [PTDC/ATP-GEO/3208/2014]. The purpose of these seminars is to approach the city (space, place and habitability) in its relationship with the movement of the body (sensation, perception and gesture), privileging a matrix of critical thinking and a multidisciplinary perspective in the relationship between art and the city. From these seminars, two published volumes emerged, important outputs, where the authors reflect and debate questions about the experience of the city and bodies and their resonance with art, opening the hypothesis for the existence of other urbanities.

We assume that the c.e.m. has in its genesis, like the scientific process and the deepening of knowledge inherent to the scientific methodology, in a non-instrumental and non-functionalist vision of promoting the common good, in a contribution of broader influence to the construction of a progressive city, emancipatory and transforming reality. Contributes to the updating of other areas related to human development, such as Education or Social Integration, through the inclusion of the experience of Art and the Body in specific contexts, in addition to a supervision work accompanying research paths and unique creation through continuous training, the organization of intensive laboratories with active professionals and the individual and collective monitoring of trainees and other professionals.

The networking that c.e.m. builds and increases deepens the density of creative and alternative thinking, reinforcing the symbolic weight of Art and also - although they do not admit it - a contribution to the creative economy and culture, whose externalities and indirect impacts on communities of different scales that c.e.m. nourishes, cherishes, stimulates and makes them flourish, are not always easy to measure by the quantitative canon of public investment.

The c.e.m. makes a fundamental institutional contribution by inhabiting, appropriating and producing the city, in addition to the noble mission of disseminating, promoting, producing and, therefore, opening the experience of Art to the experience of (any)

person and (any) place on a daily basis, deepening the democratization of art and artistic thought.

Certainly, for the development of these essential skills for academic work, but also in artistic thought and performance, with a direct contribution to the cultural economy of the city, in addition to the contribution that echoes in the human and cultural development of its population, in line with the cultural policy strategy in force in the city; and for all these reasons mentioned earlier, I think that c.e.m. will always perform with professional work, merit and dedication the functions that contribute to its mission in the city's cultural policy and, therefore, I highly recommend institutional and financial support to this group, essential for the maintenance of its cultural development activity.

Lisbon, 14th of April 2022



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