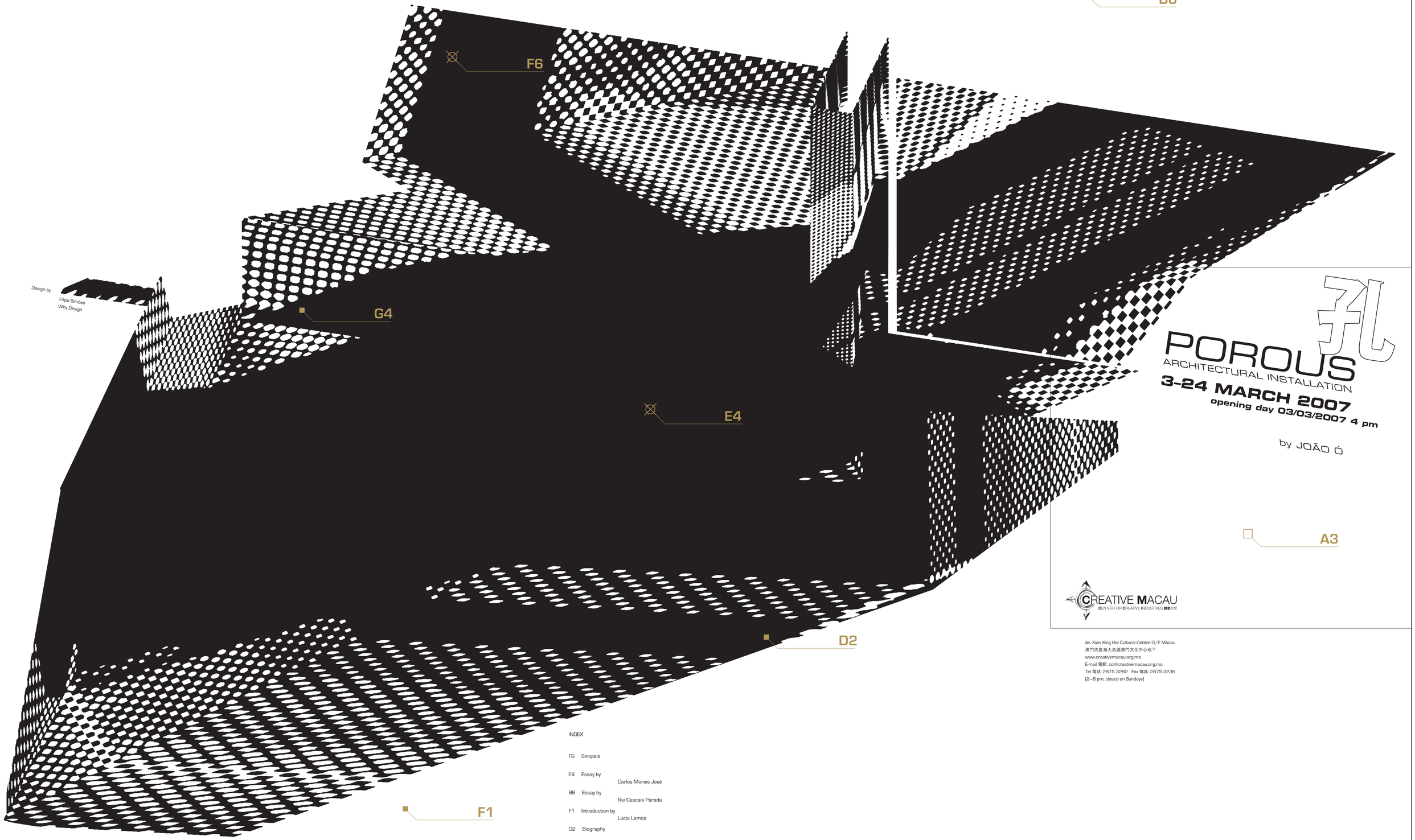


B6

F6

G4

E4

D2

F1

Design by
Filipa Simões
Why Design

POROUS

ARCHITECTURAL INSTALLATION

3-24 MARCH 2007

opening day 03/03/2007 4 pm

by JOÃO Ó

A3

CREATIVE MACAU
CENTER FOR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES 創意空間

Av. Xian Xing Hai Cultural Centre G/F Macau
澳門冼星海大馬路澳門文化中心地下
www.creativemacau.org.mo
E-mail 電郵: cci@creativemacau.org.mo
Tel 電話: 2875 3282 Fax 傳真: 2875 3236
(2–8 pm, closed on Sundays)

INDEX

F6 Sinopsis

E4 Essay by
Carlos Morais José

B6 Essay by
Rui Cascais Parada

F1 Introduction by
Lúcia Lemos

D2 Biography

G4 Dedication

A3 Plan and Front Elevation

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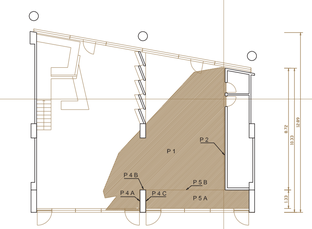
BNU Banco Nacional Ultramarino 大 西 洋 銀 行

OBS Arquitectos

POROUS MAP

A3 (075,350)

Plan + Front elevation



B6 (170,035)

Essay by Rui Cascais Parada

Porocity

There are in the English language several modes of designating and qualifying visual perception, and the cognitive activity inextricably associated with it. Thence, we have verbs such as 'to look', 'to stare', 'to peer', 'to peek', 'to watch', 'to eye' (a verbalization of a noun), 'to glimpse', 'to gaze' and 'to pore'. Obviously, it is this last mode that concerns us here.

Nevertheless, one should first inquire after some of the implications, meaning, and definition of 'pore' as a physical, or biological, entity/structure. Notwithstanding for the moment the intricacy of its mechanical functioning, a pore is basically described as a passage, or a valve between two areas of space (either two altogether *different* areas or merely two zones of the same *area*). As such, it is reactive, particularly in the case of skin pores, which are activated so as to release secretions from the *inside*, or to absorb substances from the *outside*.

Of skin pores, it is said that they "open and/or close", very much like doors or gates. However, to the contrary of doors, gates, windows, pores are *hingeless* and, as such, they could perhaps be better said to remain – from a certain point of view – always simultaneously closed and/or opened, thus challenging the fundamental logical-ontological axiom of non-contradiction, which states that *being cannot be and not be at the same time and under the same aspect*.[1]

The entity 'pore' is suspension, and latency, not a bridge between adjacent areas but an *event* that temporarily abolishes the distinction between interior and exterior (this occurs, at the biological level, through identifiable morphological changes). It is not a connection but a latent disposition for communication, and a possibility of communion[2] encompassing knowledge as lucid awareness (identifiable at the cognitive-mental level).

In the sense briefly laid out above, a pore defies conventional (*v.* normal) logic. So, returning now to the verb 'to pore'[3], one finds that also here the normal pattern of knowledge, as a relation between a subject and an object is undermined. To pore (at or into something) points towards a level of intensity[4] that renders the subject-object compound meaningless precisely because it seems to induce a merging of the two – or, more radically, a complete going beyond the illusion of their value – through a voluntary abandon or fall of the subject into the object[5] – as if the very ground that allows for both their separation (their *ex-istence* in themselves and, one is almost tempted to say, from one another) and their encounter, would collapse.[6]

*

At first, the piece *Porous* may seem to be predominantly architectural. However, a closer exam, or rather, a dwelling in the zone altered by this object conveys a blurring of the perceptual field into an experience which departs from an initial manipulative gestalt to arrive at a breaking down of the habitual, conventional inhabiting of space. But, in fact, it is through the hypnotic quality of this architecture that the whole body is offered a possibility of transformation into an organ of extreme attention, it is modified and turned into a pore (the materiality aspect of the experience) and a poring (its mentality aspect). The body is *ponfied*[7]. The architectural houses the ethical, gives it right of way.

*

Being a play with opacity and transparency, *Porous* also has a very present, if less obvious, political dimension as it deals with the public and the private aspects of life.

The vulnerability linked to a material such as glass – in that it allows the viewing of events and states inside the space contained in and by it – is reduced, although the operation is effected in a manner which does not transform the *inhabitant* into a voyeur – embushing the outside – despite the fact that it offers an increased measure of protection to the gestures occurring on the inside. *Porous* achieves a delicate balance between intimacy and the need for not estranging, or altogether removing, the space of its intervention from the public sphere. Once again, it challenges the conventional definitions that install the conditioning of the public *versus* private program in the mind-at-large. Therefore, the piece achieves a full verbalization of the noun 'pore' by proposing a new field of meaning for the action of 'poring', which can now, perhaps, be understood as a complete psycho-physical event and practice.

[1] Or, rather, simultaneously neither closed nor opened. A thing capable of remaining absolutely closed would ultimately be impervious to change into another state, in this instance, openness. Therefore, the physical elasticity of the pore – its *hingeless* state – seems to leave room for an equivalent logical elasticity.

[2] This should not be taken for any form of *unio mystica* or ecstatic surrendering.

[3] There is an opposition between 'to pore' and 'to gaze'. The latter brings about an asymmetry between the subject and the object of the gaze, an unbalance of power.

[4] "To pore" is often described as "looking intently", "contemplating meticulously".

[5] The volitional aspect should be stressed to distinguish this encounter from the mere Kantian synthesis of a *priori* judgments. Will is, in this case, supra-conditional, although there may be levels of absorption that seem to occur spontaneously when attention is intensified in the course of day-to-day tasks. Because volition is able to supersede the habitual ground of knowledge, this type of abandon stands apart from other processes, often described as *rapture* (as a sort of receiving of higher, bestowed from above, grace), to become an eminently moral gesture/practice.

[6] In meditation (an increasingly insufficient term) this phenomenon is known as 'absorption' (the correct translation of the Sanskrit – *dhyana*; Pali – *jhana*; Chinese – *chan*; Japanese – *zen*).

[7] The etymology of "pore": Greek – *poros* via the Latin – *porus* (both signifying "passage"). The Greek verb for "passage/passing through/crossing a threshold/ traversing" is *diaporein*.

To *ponfy* is a coinage that should be understood in the sense of how the voluntary action of *poring* changes the subject, although, here, it may appear to be the effect of an outer agency (i.e. the presence of the object in space).

*

SODIUM CHLORIDE

Could it all be about this drop of sweat
Picking up speed
Down the side of the face
Whispering
For the first time today
Salt and company?

Could it all be embedded there,
In minute minutes, a meeting exuding
Acute encounter, events turned marginal
As the present thunders without distance
The whole storm of the personal?

Could it be carving a shroud on the outside,
Where movement rages as foreign
As inner motion, a crowded turbulence
Leaving emptied,
Trembling branches?

F6 (525,070)

Synopsis

This site specific architectural installation is a rendition of a projected virtual image - done all over the glass facade, floor, column and wall - that operates as a spatial map within the limitations of the existing gallery.

The private and the public space is blurred by the emergence of this "porous map" into a realm encompassed by the intimate and the distant, unveiling a monochromatic subjective structure that concerns about the fundamental qualities of human perception.

G4 (625,230)

Dedication

João Ó was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1977. Grew up in Macao until returning to his birth place to study, graduating with honors in 2002 from the Faculty of Architecture University of Lisbon.

E4 (420,275)

Essay by Carlos Morais José

A(i)r

Art / Architecture. It all comes from the beginning. From fear, from vice, above all from a language vice, which is why, at least since the Greek, art and architecture span significantly coincidental semantic fields. "Structure", "construction", such is the meaning unveiled and revealed by "artys" (Lat. *artus*), in the Homeric language which once constructed and now deconstructs our world. Befitting its time, like the construction of the intangible, on the pathways of perception and realization of space, of site, of place.

Interior / exterior. Oedipian world of imposition and despotism. Without room for doubt, turning eyes into readers, incarcerated in the ancient code. Diabolic ego of rupture, and ultimate locus of pain. Without room for desire, elaborated and morphed in culture, controlled by power. Threshold. Perversity.

See. It has a place like so... like...so. Can you see it? Use your eyes, for a moment, as if you hadn't ever seen anything. As if you didn't know how to read, but only decipher the space that surrenders to your desire. And then you will be happy *as when you are with a woman*. There isn't any happiness other than being with her, the one whom you call earth, whom you define as world, a world of space, whom offers herself to you, as if you'd really existed. Making you believe, once more, that everything is still possible. Once more.

There is a gate. Hadn't noticed it before. It remains ajar as if the world continued out there. And you go in. It was a hotel in some city, like your shadows: desperately strange.

Go gentle, little bird, go nibble at my destiny, laid out there in a little tube of paper. Slowly land on that table, unhurriedly, patient time will slow down its step to see you, blind and giddy, along the table, enrapturing the whole circus. Go little bird, choose. It is said that destiny is at first sight. Or it isn't.

Interiority / exteriority. Strolling is harsh to me. Feeling that all exist outthere. And it hurts as if, coming to the window on a grey afternoon, laying eyes on the street, my body would burn, skinless. Where, then, begin and end my limits? Where is the threshold, the borderline, the gauze wall which divides and protects me from the outside? Isn't everything right here at last, carved by imaginary wholes, ensuring communication, messages?

Sotto voce, I invoke the cynical night of comedians, of distant silhouettes in opaque shop-windows, of gentlemen with names buttoned up in tombstones, and of automobiles that glide oblivious to gravity, oblique, unstoppable, full of themselves.

The word reshapes in my credulous mouth. Teeth gnaw at syllables; lips babble, announce. The famished night, which pets me as death closes in. I recognize her: the two unbearable minutes, real, cold, sudden, at the middle of the star filled night.

Down to the round horizon, imagining the sterile continuation of the circle. Flat vertigo, the timid flavor of the oasis. In the tent flaps a rotting odor of amber and incest.

Under the splendid sun of martyrs, in the onyx of insomnia, or of regular vigil, the earth runs a quite finger over the mottled body, recognizing the scars, smiling, ancient, at such ancient pretensions.

— I don't want light — whispers.

To no avail.

And all comes from air.

D2 (355,410)

Biography

João Ó was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1977. Grew up in Macau until returning to his birth place to study, graduating with honors in 2002 from the Faculty of Architecture University of Lisbon. Currently lives in Macau and works as a fulltime registered architect at O.BS-Arquitectos Lda since 2004. Besides architectural practice, as an artist, he has a strong interest in alternative ways to perceive and experience the cognitive side of space and reality and has exhibited in several countries. Most notably, in 2005, was selected as the 10 best works in the 16th Macau Arts Festival "Beyond History" (light boxes version nr 1, 2 and 3), selected work for "Macau New Wave" contemporary art exhibition held in Macau Museum of Art – Cultural Centre (light box version nr 4). Furthermore, participated in ExperimentaDesign Lisbon Biennale "Medium is the Matter" (customized design rug), representing Macau as one of the nine young creative artists. Design for a roundabout landscape/sculptural piece for the Macau Government will begin construction in 2007.

F1 (565,510)

Introduction by Lúcia Lemos

CREATIVE MACAU is an exhibition space that promotes creative work done by Macau based talents, in a systematic and sustainable way. The interior atmosphere of the gallery reflects contemporaniness, creativity and competitiveness.

POROUS is the first solo exhibition of 2007 in our space CREATIVE MACAU by the artist and architect João Ó.

POROUS explores light / shadow effects projected at the interior of the gallery by incoming light filtered by a macrographic screen fixed at the window panels of the space. The external light source, introducing through the holes in the screen renders a combination of near psychedelic effects.