



A PLACE TO BE THE PLAY/ACT PLACEMAKING HANDBOOK

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This handbook is the result of the work carried out by the students of the PLAY/ACT project

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NOTICING THE COMMON INVISIBLE(S): ECOLOGIES OF PLACEMAKING

Keywords: nature; more than humans

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The concept of nature is often determined as a “*system of objects from which we draw information, and not like an animal, a living immensity, a singular abundance of particular beings*”ⁱ. This way of telling nature has effect on the way one pays attention to the singular abundance of particular beings. It arouses curiosity and puts in inhabit a world of beings, not separated from

The importance of the and many other subjects than humans) has been placed mechanical basis. We know this is a matter of fact, not a *care*.ⁱⁱⁱ

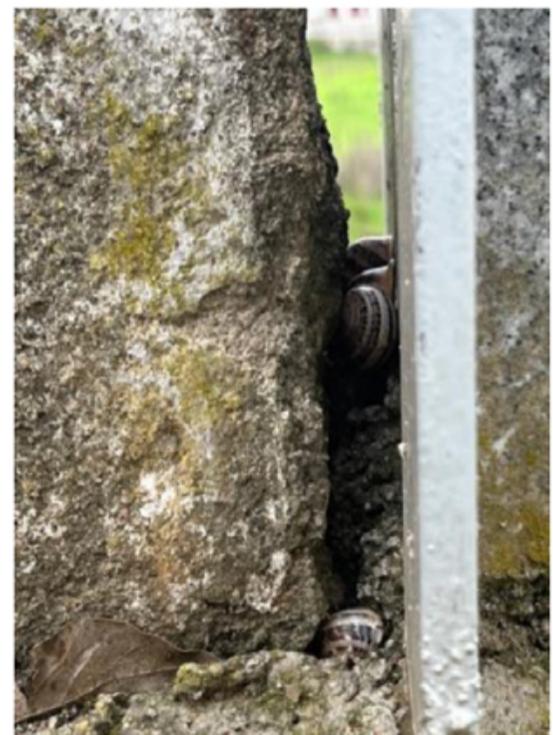


motion the awareness that we differentiated abundance of human lives.

relationship between humans belonging to other species (other mostly at the functional and that we depend on nature, but *matter of concern*ⁱⁱ or a *matter of*



We live, in general, without intimate bonds with other than humans, in the paradigm of the exceptionalism of human life and the consequent misappropriation of a common space. We are deaf and blind in relation to many other living beings, excluding them from our homes, schools, cities...



We have become depleted and living in a state of impoverishment that we impose to others without realising what an opportunity it is to live in extended communities with many other beings; to breath with clovers, learn with snails, conspire with beetles.

Even without knowing we live in multispecies large communities, even in a very urban neighbourhood.

We cohabit with billions of other subjects other than humans, beings to whom we are intimately connected, which we do not see but from whom we receive so much...

They can be found everywhere,
Under our feet
In the top of our heads
In a street corner.

They conspire to live with humans
Most of humans don't see them
or don't appreciate their presence!
But they don't give up
to cohabite with us.

Ruderal plants are one of these
They are great and beautiful
they exhale and produce oxygen,
food for others...
they produce everywhere;
in small cracks,
in rough walls,
in surprising interstices.

They want to take part of our lives,
to life and dye with us.

It is urgent to develop the art of multispecies world and care for it is attention to the "things of the greatest intent of education, in that it should nourish recognition and love for this multispecies world we live in, so that with it we continue *worlding*^{vi}.

Noticing requires that we dedicate ourselves to narratives that situate nature in an ecocentric, dynamic and sympoetic time and place. This sympoetic^{vii} approach means doing-with, which takes us back to the complex, dynamic, situated, with the company of many; very many that we need to notice and honour.

Noticing
is to be aware,
to see or become conscious of something or someone.
Noticing in Portuguese language
Is also "**Dar fé**"¹ – bear witness
Noticing
is bringing something or someone to existence.



amazing subjects
producers;
green biomass,



living in which noticing the
at the centre^{iv}. Cultivating
world"^v is probably the

¹ Vernacular expression used particularly in Alentejo region.

Noticing requires active and rigorous deepening a sense of wonder small brick under our feet to the deep blue of the sky, to let ourselves be called by by some being.

Noticing requires the use of sensual and to experience phenomena as to feel the joy of with all the body.



observation, and curiosity for the world; from the

some phenomenon,

emotional awareness full as possible encountering...

Placemaking as “the creating places with others”^{viii}

that needs also to include others than humans. This inclusion requires the ability to see them, to conspire with them in unexpected collaborations and that begins and always continues with noticing.

participatory act of imagining and may be seen as a way of worlding

That was a challenge presented in the PLAY/ACT workshop conducted in Évora University in November 2022; students were challenged to “notice other than humans” in the Art School outdoors. Each participant was given just 15 minutes to make a drift and encounter other beings that co-habited with them every day of their academic life, without knowing. These encounters were registered through photography or drawing.



The results were then shared and viewed by all: so many different subjects other than humans appeared! It was amazing how they have brought existence to so many beings. Eyes and ears opened wider, and the curiosity was established.

The comments raised revealed that participants started to be aware of the multispecies communities we live with and that was a great achievement.

Later, some participants’ testimonies let us think that maybe something has changed in their worldview with such a simple task:

“I remember that over the next few days I paid special attention to ruderal plants and the likely and unlikely places where they chose to live.”

L. Landscape Architecture student

“I remember that over the next few days I

“It was very interesting to realize and see a space from my everyday life, the Colégio dos Leões, from a different perspective. I had never walked around the university looking for more than human beings. At a glance, you only notice a simple concrete floor, but with a closer look, you can see green creatures and small animals in the joints and cracks of the material.”

P. Architecture student

Noticing we must!

Placemaking with more than humans we must!



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