
editorial

Research group **CCRE** of **FAUP** and **Editorial and Advisory Board** of **scopio Magazine** taking into account the encouraging development that scopio editorial line project has obtained until now has decided to refine the Magazine's structure, introducing some new features regarding its organization, sections and collaborators.

In fact, in these past years, **scopio Magazine** has been successful in defining itself as an independent publication that has pursued an editorial strategy able to integrate the different perspectives coming from its several invited authors and sections within its editorial line.

Accordingly, **scopio Magazine** stance, defining its identity, is one that is interested in a high level of critical analysis and focus directed to the relations between artistic and documentary photography in regards to its conception as an instrument to question Architecture, City and Territory. In other words, in relation to image and public imaginaries, as well as to the understanding of how different types of images build diverse worlds: between fiction and documentary, reproduction and manipulation, or analogue and digital.

In order to reinforce scopio's structure and consolidate the richness of the multiple perspectives in art and documentary photography as instruments to question Architecture, City and Territory, we have implemented certain changes which are described in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, we draw attention to the *new editorial platform* called **scopio Network** created in 2014 to reinforce the organization, divulgation and publication capacity of this editorial project as a whole, divulging the **scopio Editorial line Collection**.

The changes made to the editorial content and organizational structure of **scopio Magazine** implied editing and creating some novel sections in the magazine, inviting new collaborators and making clearer and more *in step* the editorial organizational structure and its members responsibilities and tasks in relation to the work and coordination envisioned.

Starting with the changes made to the editorial organizational structure and its member's responsibilities and tasks, we point out that **scopio Magazine** has now an **Editorial Coordinator** and **Editor(s)**, instead of a *Director* and an *Assistant Director*, meaning also that previous *Collaborators* will now be **Editors**.

Some changes in certain sections of **scopio Magazine** were undertaken, starting with Susana Ventura's **Close-up**, who until now has presented interviews with international renowned photographers. Susana will also experiment other strategies in following issues like incorporating the possibility for exploring other models of the interview itself as presenting a three-interview with both, an architect and his or hers main photographer, exploring the intimacy between the work of architecture and its produced image.

New features are also the inclusion in **scopio Magazine** of the **scopio International Photobook Contest**, a contest more directed towards creating an Artist Photo book, and the presence of a new Editor – Gabriela Vaz Pinheiro – for the section **Curator**. Also, the following new sections have been added: **Photographers and Architects**, which aims to address the strong and sometimes complex relation between the photographers and the architects, and **The Body in Photography**, which presents projects where the human body is significantly present. Finally, the section **Limited Editions**, in order to strengthened and divulge more strongly its invited author, has made a new partnership with **Dear Gallery** for this issue of **scopio Magazine**.

Another innovative aspect is that **scopio Magazine** is now fully integrated and giving support to the cycle of International Conferences focused on the debate and reflection about public space and architectural images called – *ON THE SURFACE*. Thus, the 3rd edition of this Seminar had as main theme *Crossing Borders and Shifting Boundaries*, the same as **scopio Magazine**'s present cycle. The call for papers for the prospective *ON THE SURFACE* will also be made in **scopio Magazine**.

Furthermore, **scopio Magazine** has been refreshed with some design changes in relation to its former layout and format, now being larger (120 x 205 mm), keeping the magazine proportions and simultaneously allowing more space for images to breathe and a bigger font size for easiness of reading.

Adding to all this, we also decided to secure a more extended period of time for the start of this new cycle in order to efficiently divulge the former **scopio Magazine** numbers dedicated to the theme *Aboveground* and guarantee some time for the redefinition and changes made for this new cycle *Crossing Borders, Shifting Boundaries*, continuing to endow on the quality and high standards of the work that has been done until now, which we want to be **scopio**'s trademark, and a key factor to the success of the magazine.

The present cycle of **scopio Magazine** aims to promote a global critical analysis around the theme of *Crossing Borders and Shifting Boundaries*, exploring how image is a medium that, on the one hand, can cross borders and shift boundaries between different subjects and disciplines where image and photography are present in a significant way. On the other hand, how image and photography are used as critical instruments to understand how architecture is transformed, how it reflects different hybrid cultural identities in many countries, regions or places and how all of this interacts with and affects our cities.

We believe that this cycle of **scopio magazine** will help to promote the awareness and reflection upon Artistic and Documentary Photography in regards to its conception as an instrument to question Architecture, City and Territory universe. This means understanding Architecture as an extended discipline and practice with an interest, on one side, in the real space and its experiences, exploring new spatial forms and architectural codes, and on the other side, in how architecture operates within larger systems: socio-cultural, technical, and historical.

This first issue of *Crossing Borders, Shifting Boundaries* cycle focuses on Architecture's Documentary and Artistic Photography. This means exploring the concept of crossing and erecting borders over different fields of study and practices with the intent of presenting a broad understanding about these issues linking them to photography image and architecture in order to question our cultures' values and desires and the specific characteristics of places and buildings. We will also be focusing our interest in the use of images as a design instrument to critically represent and explore ideas about space and society within architecture discipline and culture.

Finally, it is important to refer that being an independent publisher, Cityscopio has a distribution strategy that tries to optimize the presence of **scopio Magazine** and **scopio Editorial Line Collection** on dedicated bookshops in Portugal and around the world. We will deal with these bookshops from time to time in order to make **scopio** as much reachable as possible.

Scopio Magazine, in its physical format, will also be sold online throughout these bookshops, and we are studying a new solution, which we hope to implement soon, to fully bring **scopio** into the digital publishing universe. This means, besides other things, publishing **scopio** directly on Apple's Newstand application and thus making **scopio** available for download on both iPhone and iPad devices (**scopio** is currently present in iPad but only as a free sample).

We believe that this strategy is more adequate to our organization and may lead to a better focus on content instead on bureaucracy, and may also reduce the production costs both to us and to the reader.

For now it can be bought online at **Bruil & Van De Staaij**, **Bertrand**, **Bulhosa**, **Leitura**, **Wook** or be found in Europe at bookshops specialized in Photography or in Architecture, City and Territory, such as the **æfaup** bookshop (FAUP), the **Inc.livros e edições de autor**, both in Porto, the **A+A bookshop** in Lisbon, the **STET – livros & fotografias** in Lisbon, the **AA Bookshop** in London and the **RIBA Bookshop** in Portland, London, to mention just a few.

sections

Project

For the first number of scopio's second cycle ***Crossing Borders, Shifting Boundaries Architecture*** we have invited Paul Seawright, an accomplished author and academic within the world of contemporary photography. Seawright's projects are mostly characterized by an artistic strategy that undermines the obvious and many times depoliticizes images, creating diverse series focused on troubled or conflicting situations that encourage viewers to see and understand those realities in new ways. Exploring visual boundaries: contemporary art practice engaged with social and political issues talks about the author's work, showing a set of selected images coming from four of his series: Cities, Volunteer, The List and Things Left Unsaid.

Limited Edition

SCOPIO Limited Edition has invited Dear Gallery to be its partner for the first number of the second cycle of ***scopio Magazine "Crossing Borders and Shifting Boundaries: Architecture"***. Valter Vinagre is the invited author who has agreed to collaborate with this first number of scopio Magazine, allowing one of his fine art photographic images – Untitled, from the series "O conto do meu avô" – to be sold in this limited edition. This photographic image was presented in Dear Gallery at Porto (2015) at the time of the exhibition of Sob o Signo da Lua. Valter Vinagre is a well known Portuguese photographer whose work has been published internationally and is present in several major individual exhibitions and other significant initiatives related with the field of photography. The certificate of authenticity of each signed print of this scopio Limited Edition partnership will have the same title as before – scopio International Photography Magazine – and as subtitle scopio Limited Edition in partnership with Dear Gallery.

Reading

Pedro Gadanho is an architect, curator and writer currently based in New York. He is the Curator for Contemporary Architecture at the Department of Architecture and Design at MoMA, in New York, and the invited author in charge of the article Architecture Photography: New Territories in the MoMA Collection, which is a critical text examining the relations between architecture and photography. The text is written thinking about the institutions and

**Exploring visual boundaries: contemporary art
practice engaged with social and political issues**

Critic by Pedro Leão Neto



PAUL SEAWRIGHT
Untitled (Moped) from series "Invisible Cities", 2006
Kerlin Gallery, Dublin

Paul Seawright is both an artist and academic within the world of contemporary photography. An accomplished author whose photographs have been published and exhibited internationally, having been the first editor of the Belfast-based photography magazine *Source*. He is presently Professor of Photography and Head of School of Art and Design, in the Belfast School of Art, at the University of Ulster. Seawright's photographs are held in many museum collections including The Tate in London, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, International Centre of Photography New York, the Art Gallery of Ontario, Arts Councils of Ireland, England and N. Ireland, UK Government Collection and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

Seawright's extensive and inspiring work is mostly characterized by an artistic strategy that undermines the obvious and many times depoliticizes images, creating diverse series focused on troubled or conflicting situations that encourage viewers to see and understand those realities in new ways. Most of his work has as subject matter what can be described as post-conflict landscapes, making viewers question the identity and memory of those territories as well as deconstruct the ordinary media representations of contemporary conflicts and their stereotype narratives, either be them social fracture, state repression or political violence.

His focus is often on simultaneously revealing and overlooked details of those post-conflict territories he investigates, be it an unobserved corner, detail or artefact of any type. Thus, most of the times, his photography projects take place after the incidents have occurred, an approach referred to as late photography by David Company. The dialogue between past and present that Paul Seawright is able to establish by means of his artistic strategy empowers the selected artefacts with a far-reaching significance. In fact, they become representative of a larger whole and lead viewers to (re)think numerous main stream concepts about events and memoir of contemporary world.

Many of his projects could be highlighted, and there is a consistent strategy and conceptual framework that can be traced to his earlier series as, for example, in *Sectarian Murder* (1988), where Seawright photographs the sites of sectarian murders around Belfast, and images are paired with newspaper reports from the period of the conflict. The reference to the victim's religion are removed, undermining in this way the conventional photojournalism reportage, depoliticizing the violence, and calling the attention to the extensive civilian losses of that period. Seawright was not alone within this artistic strategy to critically address Northern Ireland conflicts and other authors could be called upon, as Willie Doherty, David Ferrell and Anthony Haughey, which in some way adopt visual strategies that do not fit to the traditional approaches taken by documentary photojournalism.

It is important to refer that a fundamental author who has influenced them all is Paul Graham who, in the beginning of the 1980's, was one of the first photographers to unite contemporary colour practice with the 'documentary' genre. As pointed out by Charlotte-Cotton, "Since the mid-1980s, Graham has tested the visual boundaries of contemporary art practice engaged with social and political issues." Continuing on the same line of thought about Northern Ireland and thinking about Seawright and other contemporary authors, it can be seen how Graham's visual language and colour use have been landmarks for contemporary photography and its innovative use of visual forms for questioning society and many of its political and economical vanilla certainties.

In *Invisible Cities* (2002) Seawright created a series that focused on some of the fastest growing cities in the world situated in the African continent, and this project gives voice to giant urban developments and troubled landscapes, which do not seem to be very visible in the developed world of nowadays. The project borrows the title of Italo Calvino's book *Invisible Cities*, recalling in this way the story of Marco Polo about impossible cities and his descriptions of unknown worlds and territories surrounded by contradictions.

Seawright has again distanced himself from the main stream subjects and drama imagery which tend to represent Africa as an impossible continent to live in and a place of incurable problems. Even though Seawright addresses the social and natural challenges of the African continent, he does this with a contemporary artistic strategy portraying the post-colonial cities of sub-Saharan Africa as Addis Adaba, Johannesburg, Lagos or Lusaka in ways that do not lead viewers to hasty judgments neither contributes to instill mainstream or preconceived political ideas. His series in "Invisible Cities" have urban landscape as their subject and distance themselves from the traditional ideas of photojournalism, drawing nevertheless our eyes and thoughts towards the political and socioeconomic issues of those territories. Other authors, responsible for a growing body of work coming from contemporary African Photograph, could be called upon to exemplify diverse non-traditional approaches and new visual forms about this continent. Just to give some examples, we have exhibitions as Snap Judgements: New Positions in Contemporary African Photography (International Center of Photography, 2006) or Apartheid & After (Huis Marseille photography museum, 2014), or to make a case in point, the work of Guy Tillim ("Documentary in a new context", Guy Tillim interviewed by Jim Casper, 2008).

In Volunteer (2010) Seawright focuses on the contemporary landscape of small North-American cities and their borders, where most of the 9-11 recruiting took its place. In Volunteer we recognize again the conceptual framework that avoids the obvious and leads the viewers to question those urban spaces and gain a more thorough consciousness about the problems in stake. In this case, the rapidly developing suburbs in America, tattered spaces where young impoverished families, unemployed, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable people live and where the officials found most of their volunteers.

Once more, we are presented with a series that drives the viewer to try to find the meaning and relation between the photographs position and order in the series. The series recalls somehow the spirit and aesthetics of the "New Topographics, photographs of a man-altered landscape" but now focusing on many contradictions of contemporary urban life and spatial configurations which are represented by abandoned areas and buildings in ruins with no apparent interest and where the majority of the disfavoured people live, in this case, referring to the suburbs in America.

Much of Seawright's work relates strongly with our present cycle of scopio Crossing Borders, Shifting Boundaries since it calls our attention to the core of many contemporary individual or collective political, social, cultural and economic problematic borders and boundaries, which seem for many people invisible. A more recent case in point of this is his ongoing project "The List" (2014), a series that deals with an invisible America: the non-places where those convicted of sexual offences have to live and work. Thus, viewers of Paul Seawright work are first intrigued by his enigmatic imagery and then led to search for the meaning of his series and vantage point discovering the several layers of meaning behind the images.

Again, we can point out that Seawright is, together with other contemporary authors, an example of the way some photographers reacted to a critique of image-making considered by many to diminish documentary power, moving ahead creating photography projects that utilize art strategies to preserve and strengthen in new ways the social pertinence of photography and its power to question viewers. This means, creating images that are evocative and remain in the imagination, making viewers less passive because they have to make an effort to make sense of the reality that is being depicted, which in a first moment can appear to be contradictory and not easily understood. In fact, even if documentary (or social documentary) is not the dominant photographic form in the art world, there are some artists who are simultaneously renowned in the art milieu" and use photography as an important, unsettling, political and social tool. Just to point out in this line of thought another significant author, the Canadian artist Allan Sekula (1951 – 97) is a good example. Both in writing and in photography, he puts forward strong arguments for using art to support thorough, and politicized investigations of economic and social issues.

Looking again to Seawright's series of "The List", and of how they represent and combine derelicted urban locations, abandoned buildings and urban structures, as well as many detailed images of artefacts of those non-places, its recognisable that they give or induce viewers towards a powerful mental work. At the same time, while viewers are led to observe and search for meaning in the images, the drab imagery is also charging them with emotions, possibly releasing their most inner concerns. Thus, "The List" is another case in point of contemporary art photography with an anti-reportage stance, choosing to represent the "invisible" or undervalued, calling our attention through the details of non-place depressive environments of the humiliation that living in those behindhand dwellings signify, and doing this in a way that calls for a qualifying attitude.

Furthermore, we should not ignore the ongoing tension between modern and postmodern trends in the works of Seawright, something that can also be perceived in the works of many other contemporary photography authors. Thus, for example, in "Sectarian Murder" and other works of Seawright, just to make a case in point, we see the tension between the apparent traditional documentary objectives – focused on the subject matter of diverse violence related with the British presence in Northern Ireland – and the other focused on questioning and exploring the medium of photography by adopting visual forms that "brake the rules". This meant, as already explained in this text, creating series that undermine the main stream practice of photojournalism reportage imagery, removing the influence of politics and avoiding swift judgments about violence and calling the attention to the extensive civilian losses of that period.

To finish, we can mention a more recent work of Seawright "Things Left Unsaid" the result of focusing his research and photography towards American television studios responsible for creating the news bulletins about present wars and conflicts around the world. Seawright, again, creates visual forms that try to undermine mainstream convictions and attitudes. This means creating images that focus on the illusory nature of those studio spaces where information is selectively transformed into news, and therefore are responsible for the sensational representations to which we are exposed and that ultimately distances and desensitizes the public in relation to reality and many of its human tragedies.

Seawright continues, in this way, to adopt an artistic strategy that undermines the obvious of troubled or conflicting situations making visible aspects normally overlooked or politically controlled by mainstream media, encouraging viewers to see and understand those contemporary realities in new ways. It seems that the use of artistic strategies, within the world of photography and other visual forms of expression, to (de)construct social, economical and political events, making the public (re)think contemporary issues and consequences of history, continues to be well established.

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