

20783 | Utopia built body to body. Dance pavilion in Leça da Palmeira

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Abstract

As an alarm clock, capable to wake my body and mind, I can still remember to hear, from the silence of my room, "that" specific classical music record echoing from the living room. Flying downstairs, those musical notes turned into multiple movements, making me capable of communicating not only with the space but also with my inner me. I've always known myself as a dancer, learning from different schools the technique that allowed me to free and expand the limits of my body.

Later, I found in architecture what I was looking for in dance - the path to an embodied feeling. As stated by William Forsythe, in Público, "Architecture wanted to be a dance, (...) a utopia built body to body". Perhaps, for me, it has always been like this - dancing and raising, simultaneously and unconsciously, the "stage" of my life.

I discovered that the experience promoted by the architecture of each dance school was different. Today, as an (almost) architect, and also a ballet teacher, I'm capable of pointing out the space characteristics that promote an environment that is suitable for working in the studio, socializing in the stretching and changing rooms, engaging both privacy and familiarity, but also be open to the community.

This study proposes an analysis (using memory and photographic records) of my formative path as a dancer and as an architect, making it possible to design a dance pavilion that responds to the occasional needs of a Dance Academy in Leça da Palmeira - rehearsals for shows with many students, partnering classes (high ceilings), open classes for everyone, a stage for performances, a meeting point for students, friends, and workers from different artistic areas and beyond. I believe in the catalyzing power of space and also being capable of promoting an education that is increasingly oriented toward happiness.

This investigation is part of an ongoing Master's Dissertation in Architecture, at FAUP, under the guidance of professor Helder Casal Ribeiro.

Keywords: architecture; dance; education.