

Cities, Communities and Homes: Is the Urban Future Livable?

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

The architecture of the memory – the Japanese house

- **Format:**

Written paper / verbal presentation / ppt screening

- **Author(s) Name:**

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- **Abstract (300 words):**

"As an architect who has been thinking primarily about how to link and connect spaces, it was extremely difficult for me to deal with so many bedrooms and bathrooms as separate rooms."

Sou Fujimoto. Fujimoto Architecture Works 1995-2015

Why is it that a house continues to be conceptualized as an area subdivided into smaller independent spaces in which only a certain amount of functions can take place?

The present work proposes to take as a point of departure the only certainty that we, architects, can have when designing a house, either if it's social housing or a house: the uncertainty of its occupants' future needs. The problem resides in the understanding of what it means to inhabit a home, of what it means to experience space: the interaction between the body and the space has been almost completely relegated; the home is

instead seen as the sum of sleeping/working/playing (bedrooms), preparing meals (kitchen), eating (dining room), taking care of the body (bathroom) and the interaction between people (living room). This leads to a continued process of building houses according to a matrix of functionally predetermined spaces.

The first part of the article will be theoretical, in order to analyse what's wrong in contemporary housing: why is it that it doesn't respond to its occupants needs. This will be done first through the examination of some authors' theories: Lars Lerup with '*Building the unfinished*'; Brolin Brent with '*The failure of Modern Movement*'; Amos Rapoport with '*House, form and culture*' and Habraken with '*Supports*'. Secondly, the architecture of the memory will be addressed, through the thoughts of Juhani Pallasmaa.

The second part of this article will be practical: it will compare, with case studies, the Japanese and the western house, that is, the ambiguous house (which houses the imagination and the memory) versus the functionally pre-determined house.

This article springs from a research for PhD which supports the view that a higher level of sustainability can be achieved through a different approach, one that thinks the house not in terms of functional considerations, but through an interactive approach between the user and the space – the house is formed by interconnected spaces, functionally undetermined, which allows the user to appropriate the space in accordance to his own purposes and interpretation within an interactive relationship between user and space. The spaces that form this house allow different interpretations through the passing of time - different users will give it a different use. This alternative "responsive housing" concept will be focused on allowing interactivity in the usage processes and will stand on the idea that the design of a house should start from the understanding of the interaction between body and space.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Inês Seixas Pinto is born on the 1st of October of 1980 in Lisbon, Portugal. In 2003 she graduates in Architecture from Instituto Superior Técnico (I.S.T.). From 2007 until January 2013 she works as an architect in Sua Kay Architects, in Lisbon. In 2012 she concludes her Masters in Studies of the Space and Housing in Architecture, in the Faculty of Architecture of Lisbon (F.A.U.T.L.), beginning her PhD in the same University, awaiting now for the scheduling of its exam: 'The architecture of memory – a study about the interaction between housing and its inhabitant', supervised by Dr. Jorge Cruz Pinto and Dr. José Lucas Callado.

From February 2013 until July 2015 she lived in Singapore, where she worked at SAA Architects, on the Design Team. In August 2015 she returns to her hometown, working at Broadway Malyan Architects from August 2015 until July 2016. From July 2016 onwards she starts her own small practice together with a friend, Ricardo Figueiredo, named AIR arquitetura, focused primarily on the renovation of houses.