

Article

## Visual Notation as a Narrative Development of the Perception of Change

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### Abstract

The Casa da Musica on Av. da Boavista, Porto, is a commanding iconic building at first sight in its own space. Two roads from the building, tangential to Rotunda da Boavista, is a huge area of cleared land for a new development on the site of the former Boavista Railway Station. On the next tangential road is a café whose customers look across the road towards the exposure of the Casa da Musica to a surprising comparison of the building's roof incline with the regular urban skyline. The article takes this detail as an instance of the potentiality to be found in casual perceptions that can be encountered in moments of urban change that punctuate a city's life. The author's means of visualising such perception is through a form of visual notation. Such notations as the author presents in illustration of his argument employ a transitional mode of visualising that is instructional to the viewer that can communicate the transitory perception of change pertinent to the site under consideration. The visuals were being made as the first draft of the article was being written. Since the article started to suggest a direction for what started as focused recreational activity, the visuals culminate in, and the possibility is posed, of how the Casa... could itself cast a net across and accommodate the void space temporarily opened up by the development site.

### Keywords

visualisation; cognition; polysemiotics; transitional multimodality; unconscious; perception

### 1. Introduction

The artwork referenced in this article is a series of visual notations – that might ordinarily be termed sketches – in response to an urban development site observed from the outside of a café on the opposite side of the road alongside which the development takes place. The public location for the production of the visuals determined the limitation of variously an A5 and A4 sketchbook and black-ink drawing pen. Within such limits, their concern became that of notation and supporting annotation of the transitory perception of change in a particular urban context. What can be learned from such observation is that city developmental sites, in their process of removal of existing buildings, are likely to open up temporary and unfamiliar vistas that prompt different perceptions of the existing environment.

The development site in question is the preparation of land between the city of Porto's Avenida da Franca, from which the site is viewed, looking West, and Rua de 5 de Outubro, alongside which, on the junction with Av. Da Boavista, is the Casa da Musica, an iconic building by the architect Rem Koolhaas, Figure 1a. The site is the at-present levelled land of the Porto Boavista train station, which opened in 1875 and closed at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Figure 1a. As counterpoint to the degree of apparent abstractness of the visuals, is a section of wall enclosing the site on Avenida da Franca along which is painted representational frescoes of former days of the working railway in spray-painted monochrome, Figure 1b.

The site at present offers a view of the roof and East side of the Casa da Musica that assimilates

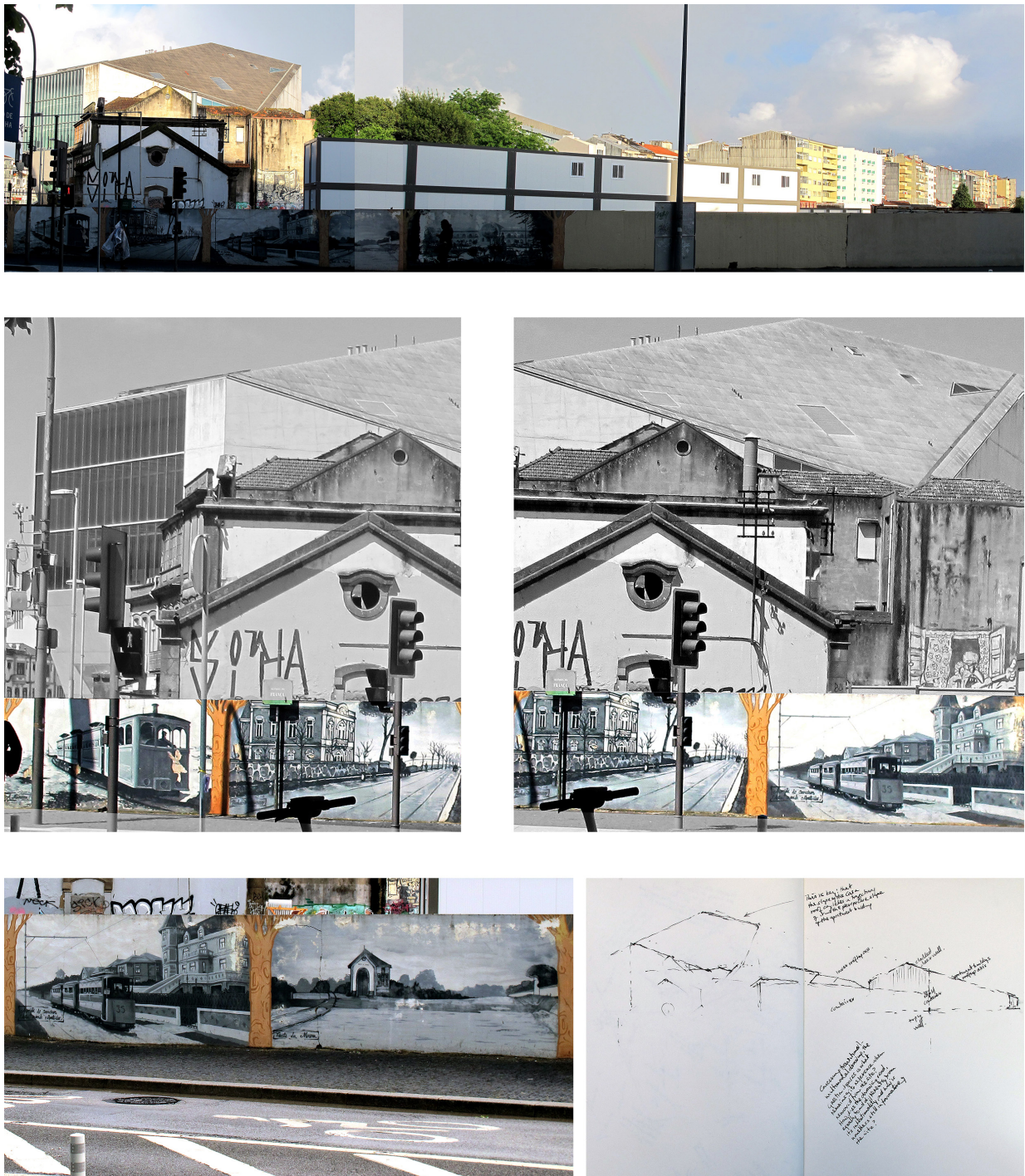


Figure 1a/b/c: Photomontage of the development site and vista, above; street art frescoes seen in front of the railway buildings facades, middle; street art comparison with example of author's visual notation, below © Michael Croft 2021.

with Porto's urban vernacular skyline, as opposed to the building's more familiar stand-alone presence on its own dedicated ground. While there may well be permanently integrative views of the Koolhaas building in relation to Porto's red-brick rooftops, its viewing from the café has prompted the question of whether visual notation is capable of charting a sense of transition within and as perception, and if so, what might be the appearance of such visuals. The latter question is in the context of the observation of visual perception itself as well as perception at the service of observation through visual notation. The research question is therefore how 'cognitive processes known from the inside, as it were, can be visualised, that are inspired by potentially sharable visual perceptual events and other less definable mental circumstances. The article is structured as at first offering some theoretical background concerning cognition, semiotics and the transitional multimodal, a mostly visual presentation of the visual response to the site, that latter then followed by a discussion of the theory to the sketches.

## 2. Cognition, Semiotics, the Present image, and the Transitional Multimodal

Theoretical reference can give intellectual substance to drawn visualisation that is otherwise driven by subjective artistic habits. The present context for such visualising is how transitional aspects of the perception of urban change may be perceived. Specifically, this concerns how to *read* drawn content of observation, and how to empathise with or *feel* such observation. A related question emerges of what aspects of an individual's perception are transferrable to others through their reading and feeling. In this respect there is some misalliance involved. For the author/artist making the notations, the perception guides and is in response to the observation in-situ in front of the site. For the viewer, the perception emerges in response to whatever degree of recognition can be obtained from viewing the resulting sketches through the veil of idiosyncratic handling of the medium. This is as true of the present frescoes on the perimeter wall of the site, despite the frescoes being more obviously representational, Figure 1c.

Stell (2012 para.3), citing a wall drawing by Benar Venet in the context of discussion of drawn notation particularly involving mathematics, states, in terms that

might have a degree of general relevance to visual notation, that it 'involves a world of concepts that will be quite foreign to most viewers'. Stell (ibid, para.10, citing Arscott) reiterates this comment through reference to the similarity of the artist Whistler's etching technique to 'shorthand noting'. Stell (ibid, para.16, citing Ashwin) suggests of Peirce's three categories of sign, icon, symbol and index, that when drawing prioritises mark making, the latter can 'simultaneously be indices signifying the gestures which produced them and also icons or symbols signifying something quite different'. The visuals in question in this article are arguably instances of this simultaneity. In this respect, the aforementioned *subjective artistic habits* may be following a tendency that is innate in notational drawing that is concerned with transition. Stell refers to one function of such drawing as 'recording gesture', concerning 'movements of the body according to some scheme'. More subtle body movement can also be registered in drawn notation as rapid small marks that could be considered to convey the pulsing of the body, and offer means of more emotional or psychic interpretation.

The *reading* of the visuals, where some of them show hand-written notes, concern what is consciously noticeable and the phenomenological *feeling* of the content through visual and other-sensory domains, especially touch. Both cognition and phenomenology have been the subjects of recent articles published in Urban Creativity journals. Stampoulidis (2019, p.26) refers to 'verbal text (language) and pictorial elements (depiction) as clearly a form of polysemiotic communication'. Louhe-ma explains that cognitive semiotics involves combinations of language, gestural body language and pictures in polysemiotic communication (2018, p.4), and that its bases as the 'iconic sign, indexical sign' or 'symbol' variously prioritise and combine the 'grounds' of 'iconicity, indexicality, and conventionality' (2018, p.6, citing Peirce and Jakobson). Arguably, it is important to acknowledge that such complexity of issues does underpin visual creative endeavour that determine sensory understanding both for the artist and their work's viewer.

In the domain of cognition and semiotics that range between linguistic and visual, Pecher, Boot and Dantzig (2011, p.219-20) describe *grounded cognition theory* as concerning experiences that are stored in the brain as representative 'perceptual symbols', groups



of which can *simulate* any 'particular concept'. According to Pecher et al (2011, p. 231, citing Barsalou and Wiemer-Hastings), such 'abstract concepts' may to some extent simulate more 'concrete situations'. 'Image schema' is the mechanism that processes between experience and abstract concept. Pecher et al (2011, p.233, citing Johnson and Lakoff) explain that image schemas are 'analogue representations of mostly spatial representations and movements', and 'give structure to experiences across modalities'. In this respect image schemas may be associated with the apprehension and articulation in the mind that result in pictorial *presentations*, rather than representations, of movement and change between and across varied perceived situations. Presentational visual responses are arguably likely to appear more or totally abstract. Such theory bears comparison to what Bergson (2004) refers to as the '*present image*' as opposed to the '*represented image*'. From the artist's perspective, the notion of the '*present image*' may to some extent concern the articulation of objects themselves moving, oneself moving in relation to objects, or both, that result in pictorial images (See the author's drawings, Croft, M. (2020) Observation of Perception, considered through drawing. Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice Issue 2, Vol. 5. pp.241-259 DOI: 10.1386/drtpt+00035\_1; Croft, M. (2021) Walking avenue, tea pulling, trance dance, helicopter landing-pad: Sketching elements of perceptual consciousness. Black Book Drawing and Sketching (BBDS) Issue 2, Vol. 2. AP2 Open Access Journals. journals.ap2.pt/ondex.php/BBDS/article/view/394). According to Bergson on the nature of *image*:

That which distinguishes it as a *present image*, as an objective reality, from a *represented image* is the necessity which obliges it to act through every one of its points upon all the points of all other images... Representation is there, but always virtual – being neutralized, at the very moment when it might become actual, by the obligation to continue itself and to lose itself in something else. (Bergson, 2004, p. 28)

This reference to Bergson moves the consideration of imagery conceived or charged by the perceptual senses from that of communication to the nature of the image itself, in this instance suggesting a kind of image that is

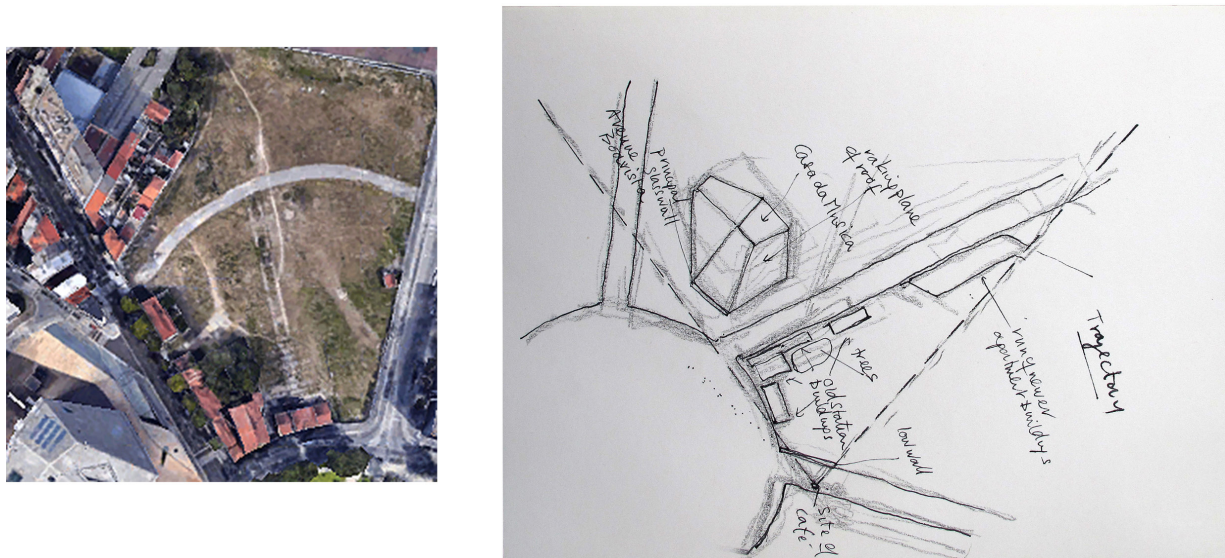
only cursorily formed because it embodies and conveys movement and transformation in its very makeup.

Pigrum's (2009; 2014) theorised 'transitional multimodal' approach to drawing can metaphorically *draw* the viewer into and along with a sense of transformation in process. Pigrum provides in-depth analysis of 'transitional notation' through reference to Peircian semiotics, phenomenology, object-relations psychoanalytical theory and Lacanian psychoanalytical theory in the context of visual art and its relevance to education. According to Pigrum (2014, p.2): 'The gap between potentiality and actualisation in transitional notation... is also the gap between desire and fulfilment, a gap that is filled with an intense somatic and mental activity'. Importantly, Pigrum (2014, p.5, citing Beardsworth) calls on the linguistic theory of Kristeva to distinguish between signifying practices and a semiotic undercurrent '[...] that continually transgresses and remodels the signifier'. The Kristeva reference beckons the question of the Freudian-founded psychodynamic unconscious, and therefore the integral position of the human as their own *subject* within language, in this instance extended to include the medium of drawing as a kind of language operating similarly as interplay between symbolic and semiotic levels of communication. The semiotic level is more the domain of the psychodynamic unconscious. While Pigrum's thesis concerns a phenomenon of artistic practice that is of profound depth, in the present discussion of visual notations at the level of portable sketchbook entries, his suggestion of disjuncture between the cognitive semiotic sign system and the unconscious level of cognition will suffice. Pigrum (2014, p. 13, citing Gell) refers to '[...] the isomorphy of structure between the cognitive processes we know from the inside and the spatio-temporal structures of distributed objects in the artefactual realm'.

### 3. Drawn Visual Notations made In-situ

This section of the article presents the process from the start to closing of a period of observation and visualisation of the chosen site, within the format and limitation of sketchbook-style visual notation. A hand-drawn diagram from a Google Earth photo compared with the latter photo, shows the expanse of the author/artist's vision that embraces the vista from the point of view of their position outside the café, Figure 2a – 2b.



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Figure 4a/b: View of the site from Casa da Musica metro, above; visual of the same view © Michael Croft 2021

The same diagram with a tracing paper overlay includes annotations of key elements that will be involved in the site's observation, Figure 3a. In the process of duplication of information quite necessary for the research's narrative, the blocks of handwritten text also start to read visually in relation to their referents, Figure 3b.

The clearest view of the development site is from the concourse of the Casa da Musica metro station further down Avenida da Franca, Figure 4a. The visual of this view is an attempt to embrace the space of the site, which may be considered a *void space* – a contention that is discussed in the **4. Discussion**, below – that one looks across towards architectural landmarks and details of interest, Figure 4b.

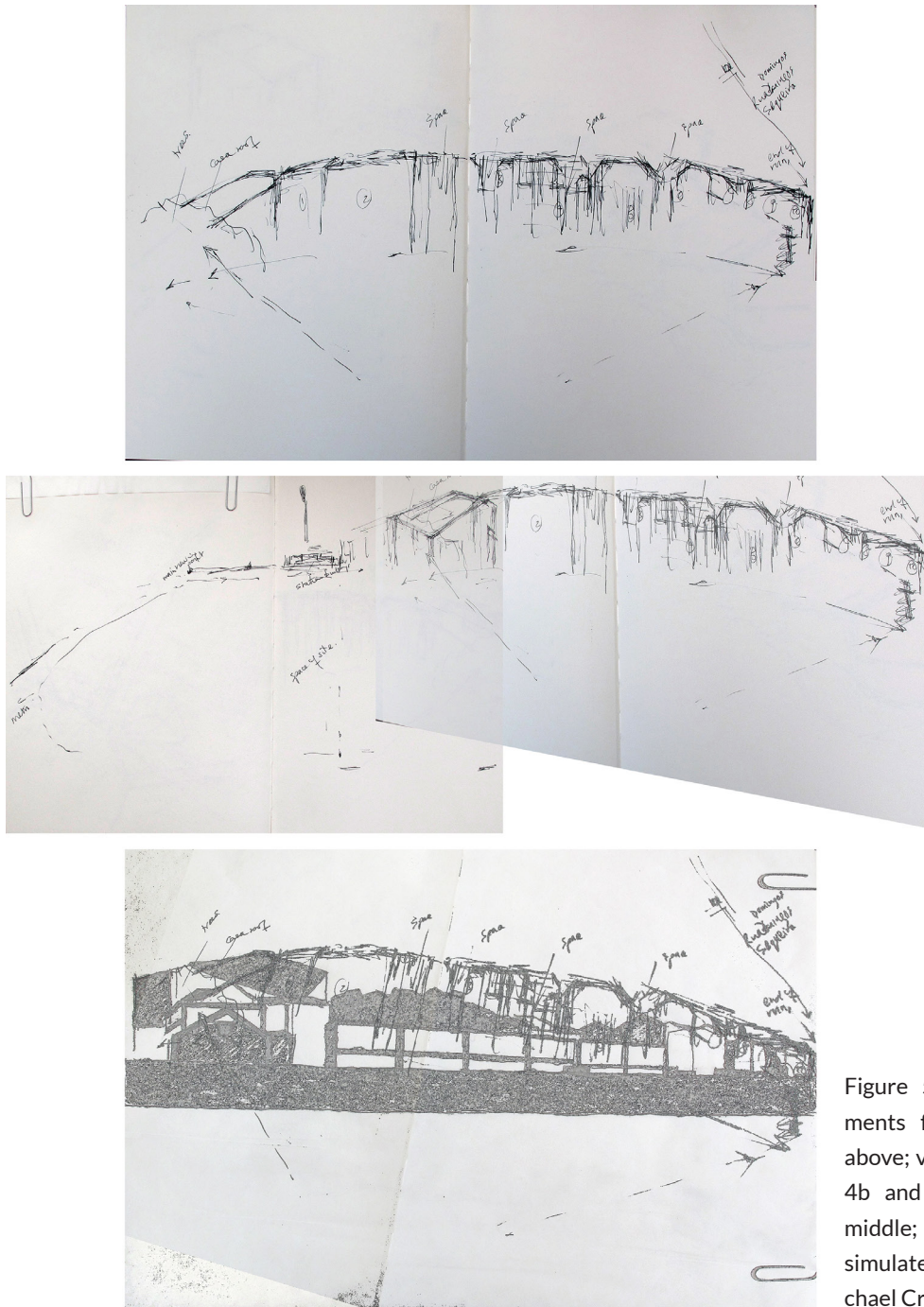


Figure 5a/b/c: Visual of tenements from metro concourse, above; visual as shown in Figure 4b and new visual combined, middle; digital manipulation to simulate fresco, below © Michael Croft 2021

The Casa da Musica metro concourse up to and including the roof of the Casa... spans across the same space, but looking more to the right, to the end of the expanse of rooftops seen from the view from the café, Figure 5a. The two visuals combined span the full extent of space as viewed from the café, but from the vantage

point of the metro concourse where the space that one looks across from the café can now be seen, Figure 5b. Insofar as digital manipulation is part of the research's toolbox, it has been useful to the research in terms not otherwise discussed in the article, to play with overlays and simulate how the visuals might look if their render-



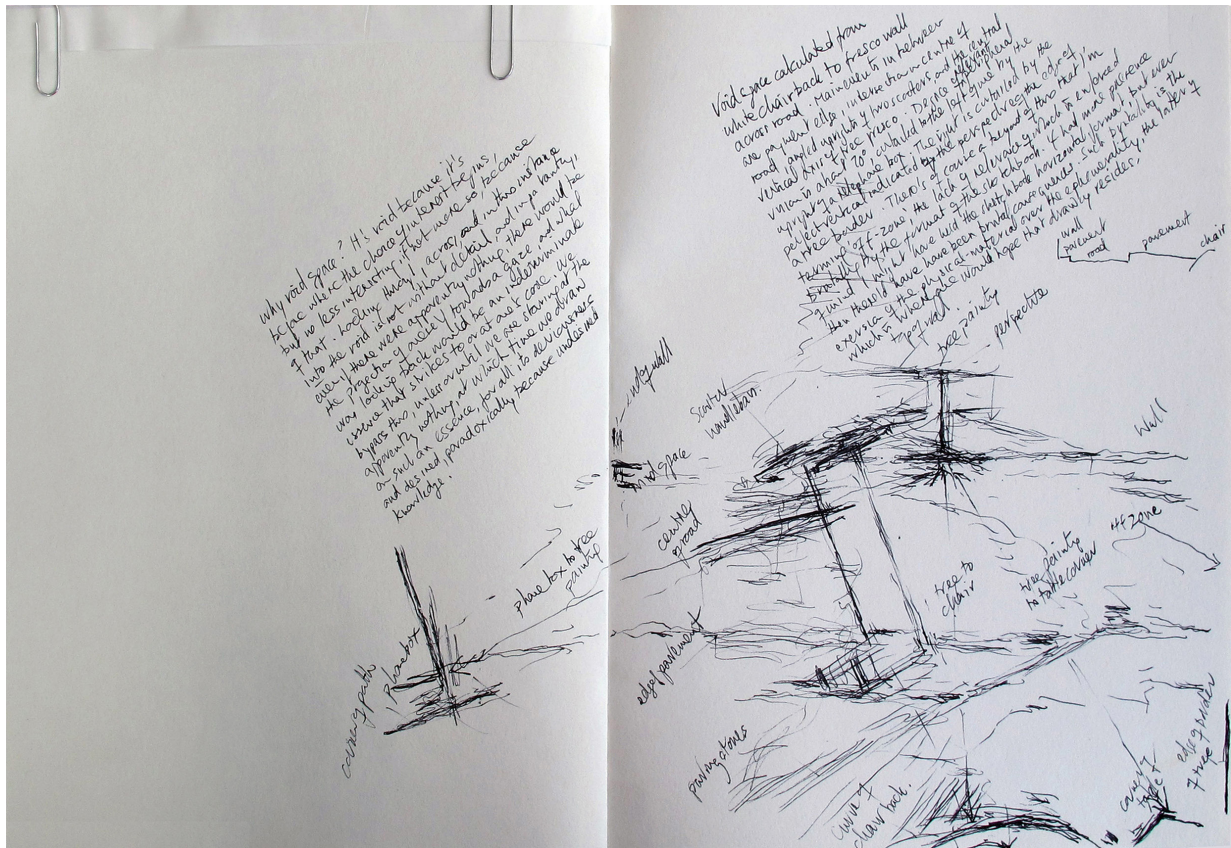


Figure 6: Visual of void space of road between café vantage point and site © Michael Croft 2021

ing mimics the style of the site's existing frescoes than is possible analogically, Figure 5c.

From the vantage of the café, the road between this location and the site also became considered as void space, Figure 6.

When there are no material boundaries to curtail peripheral vision, one may consider that relevant space peters out. While the extreme periphery of the vista observable from the café is shown in Figure 5, the details shown and annotated in Figure 6 show the span of space near-at-hand, as it were, curtailed by and to an extent manipulated to fit the sketchbook.

The visuals, Figure 7a/b, show further develop-

ment of the question of space, including a second state of the same drawing on a tracing paper overlay.

The latter visual, Figure 7b, then has embedded a semi-transparent photo-collage of the vista to show the visual's degree of fit, Figure 8a. The annotations on the visual, Figure 8b, read for example as 'corner of Casa roof', 'dip in trajectory', 'far edge of building', 'edge of buildings', 'handlebar of scooter', 'curve of chair back', 'base of bin', providing linguistic suggestion of movement in and about trajectories of vision.

When gazing into the space of one's vision, directions that may be formed at random by this apparent casualness may actually be picking up on formal details such as edges and contours, especially if their contrast is one of the factors by which the details that they define



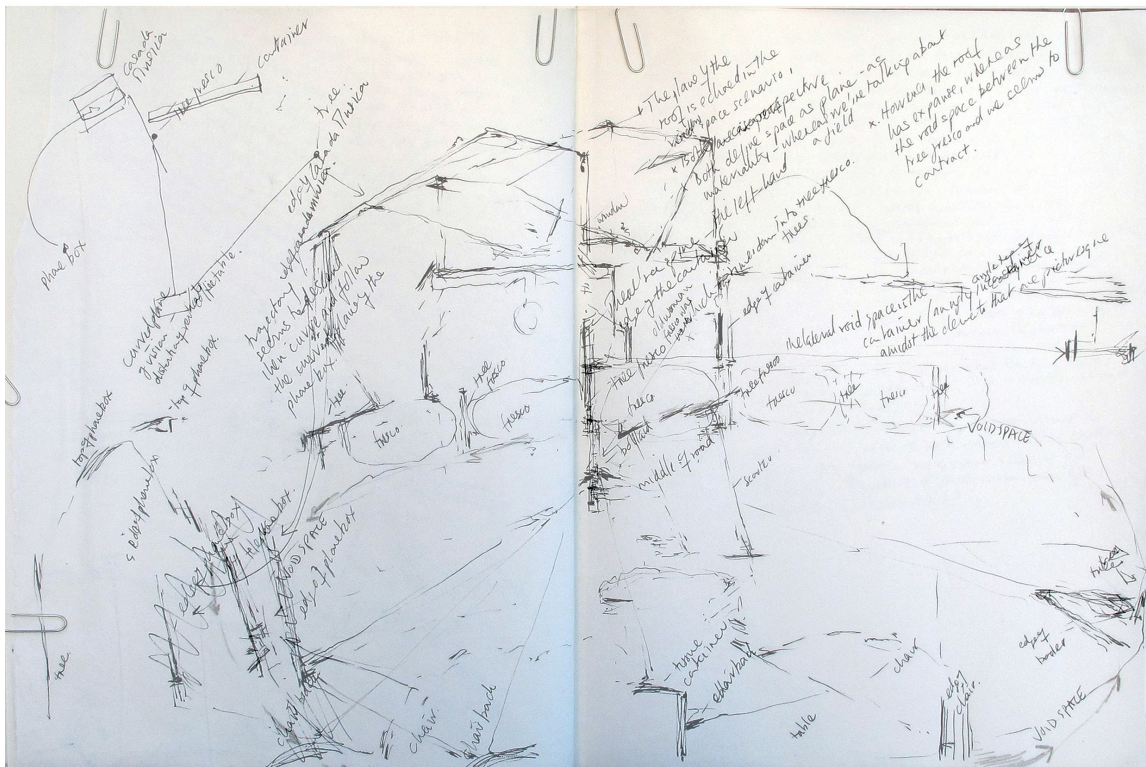
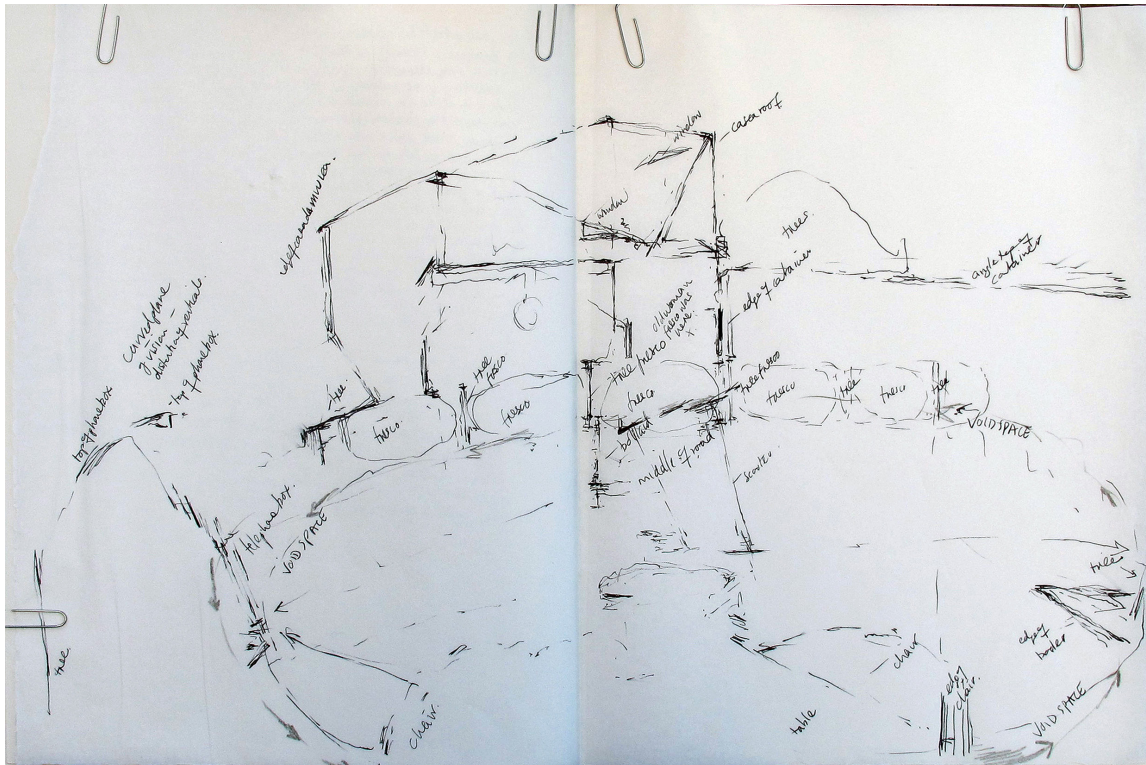


Figure 7a/b: Void space visual, above; further development with tracing paper overlay, below © Michael Croft 2021



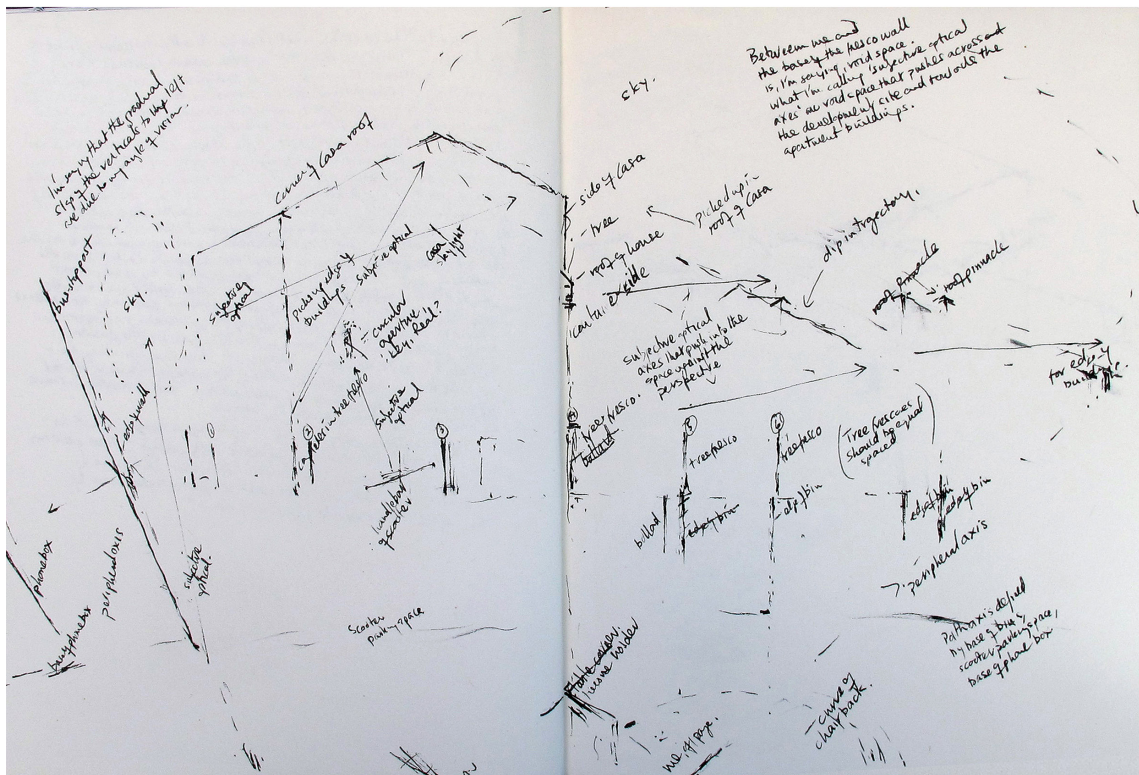


Fig 8a/b: Visual Figure 7b with overlaid digital photo-collage, above; visual that includes possessive nouns and grammar, below © Michael Croft 2021



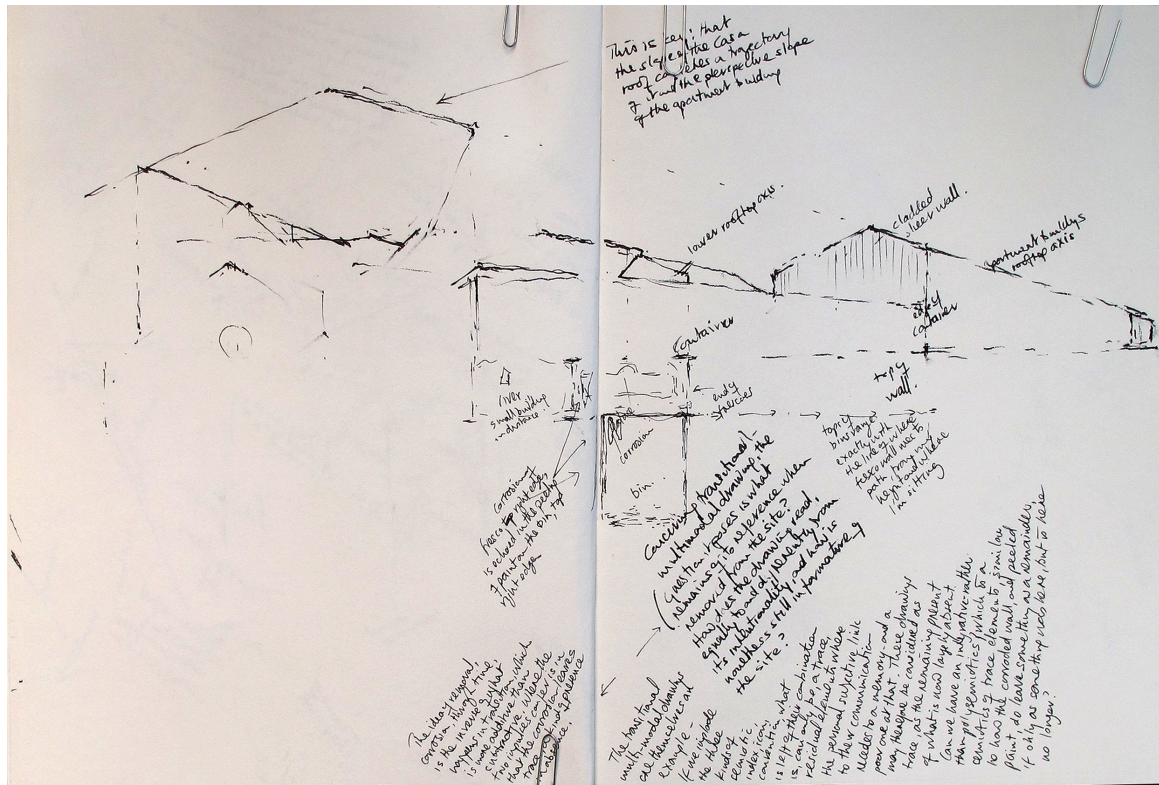


Figure 9a/b: Visual to show principle axis between Casa... roof and tenements, above; digital mock-up of visual as street art, below © Michael Croft 2021



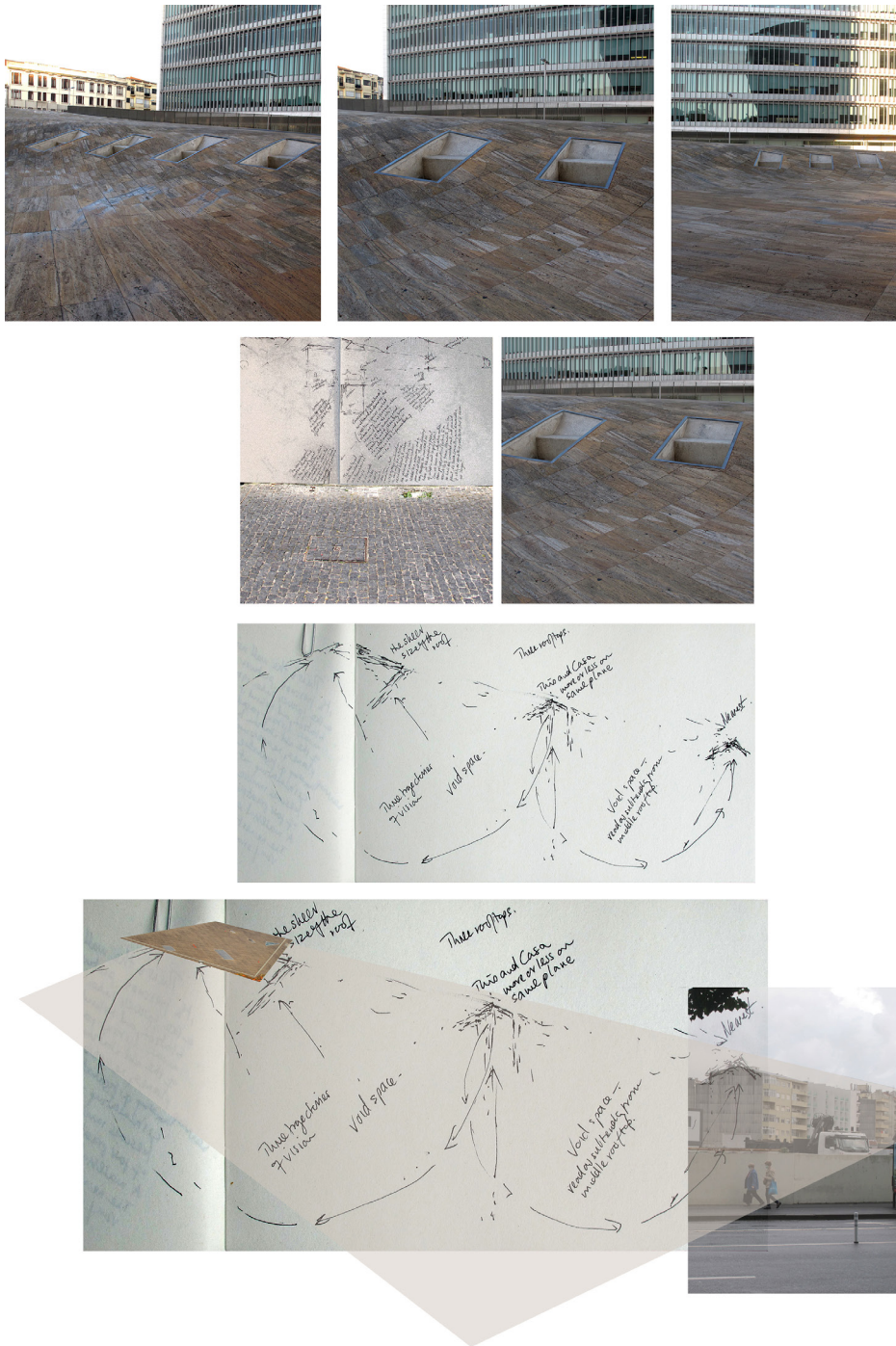


Figure 10a/b/c/d: Seating inlaid in Casa... concourse, above; seats' design and concourse echoed in street art fresco mock-up, upper middle; visual of void space and rooftops' trajectory, below middle; visual digitally overlaid with scaled up Casa... roof as blur © Michael Croft 2021

become points of visual interest. The visual first seen in Figure 1c, above, now developed, concerns the movement of the axis from the roof of the Casa... to the principle line of the tenements that involves what linguistically has in the former visual, Figure 8b, above, been termed a

'dip in trajectory', Figure 9a. At one point in the research, digital mock-ups were made of how the visuals would look if applied to the site's dividing wall, Figure 9b.

The digital mock-up, Figure 9b, offered a

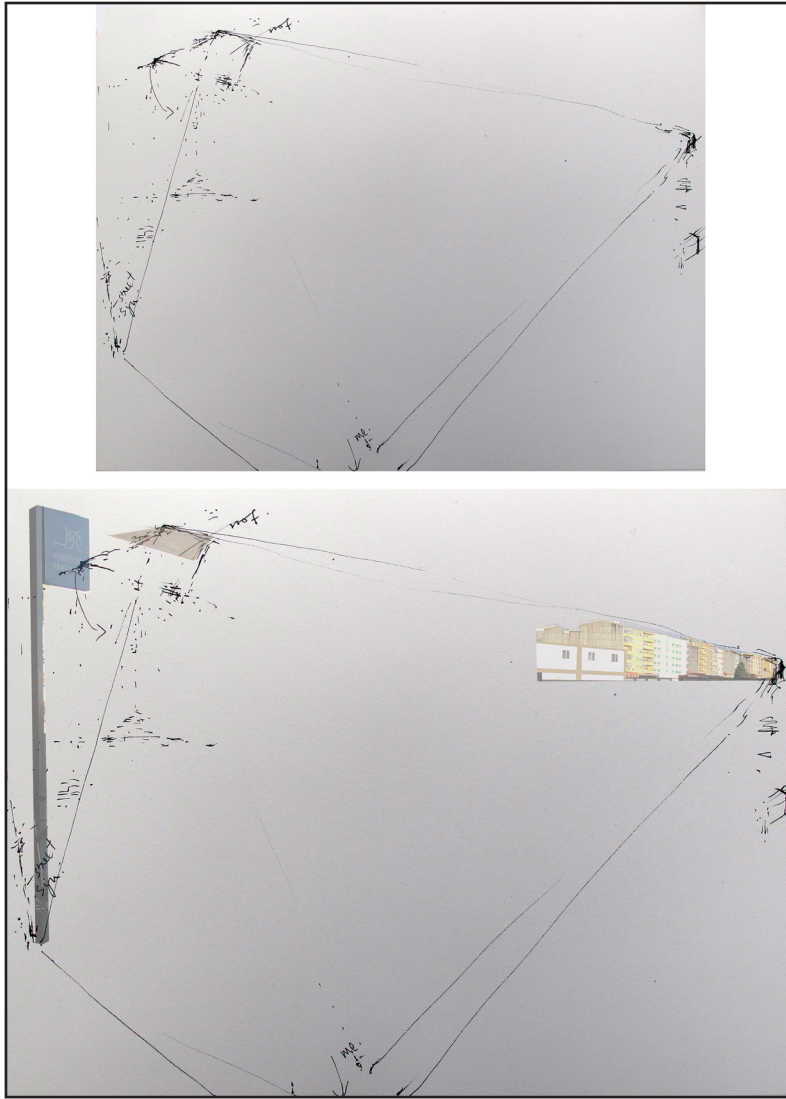


Figure 11a/b: Hand-drawn visual of extension of Casa... roof, above; same visual with digital collaged thumbnail photos, below © Michael Croft 2021

chance comparison to photos of concrete benches inset into the casa's tiled undulating concourse, Figure 10a/b.

The visual, Figure 11a, of the aforementioned roof idea, evokes space more organically, and the visual Figure 11b indicates a more experiential response to the possibility, over which photo thumbnails of principle motifs have then been montaged.

The fresco wall is midway between the viewing of the site from the café and the vista available to be viewed. One of the frescoes on the perimeter wall of the development site has particularly suffered corrosion by the weather, Figure 12a. Another comparison is offered by the peeled enamel of the nearer garbage bin, as seen previously in Figure 12a, left photo, visualised in the

sketchbook entry shown in Figure 12b.

In the last of the set of visuals, the roof can be seen stretched to include at least two other viewing points, Figure 13a/b.

#### 4. Discussion

The visuals shown as: **3. Drawn Visual Notations made In-situ** may suggest that the transitional multimodal involves several types of cognition and the simultaneous use of different semiotic systems. In this case, the combination has been visual notation, including elements of more representational sketching, handwritten annotation, traced overlays, and digital photo-collage. In suggesting that the foreground of the visual, Figure 4a/b., is a space, let alone a *void* space, one encounters the



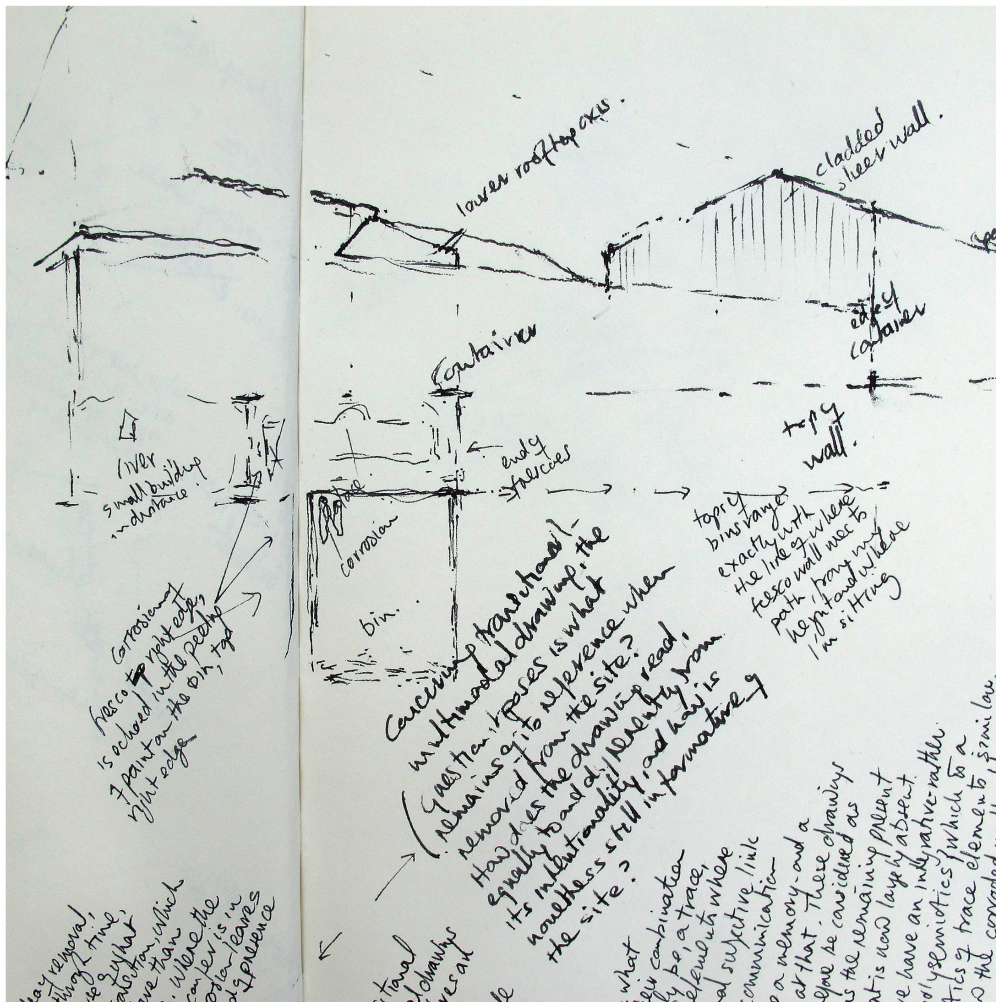


Figure 12a/b: Details to show fresco corrosion by weather, above; detail of visual that includes reference to such corrosion, below © Michael Croft 2021





Figure 13a/b: Stretching of Casa... roof between principle viewing position at café, Casa... roof and metro concourse, above; stretching of roof between café, end of tenements and concourse, below © Michael Croft 2021

question of projecting a type of *reading* into the blank of the paper, It may be argued that formally the curving contour towards the Casa... roof on the right is not only defining a boundary but embracing a containing space of one's vision, for both the author/artist and the drawing's viewer. Such reading involves a more subjective level of cognition. If the viewer also accommodates the idea of *void*, either through some extra form of contextualisation, such as here provided by the article, or as their own subjective sense then arguably the contentiousness of

the word itself bodes the question of relationship of it to oneself in a deeper unconscious sense. The visuals' own void spaces, how they read as collaged, and indications that the present combined image is a reproduction that need not necessarily have initially been analogue, may be considered as a discreet example of polysemiotics in practice. The initial analogue basis of these visuals begins to contain the author/artist's empathic projection into it, via the elements drawn, and their method, of the sense of vastness of the environmental scale.

Figures 5 and 6 further address the question of void space. What can be meant by this, is the fact that in the normal course of visual perceptual life one focuses on things while not directly acknowledging, if at all, the sense of gazing across spaces, hierarchizing what seems important while ignoring, in particular, peripheral vision that opens out one's vision and accommodates more unconsciously than is and can be realised. Ironically, however, it could be argued that only in peripheral vision is one more alert, albeit reflexively and mostly beneath consciousness, to sound, movement and even the potentiality of touch. Pallasmaa (2018 p.14) states of peripheral vision: 'A remarkable factor in the experience of enveloping spatiality, interiority and hapticity is the deliberate suppression of sharp focused vision'. Furthermore, Pallasmaa (ibid, p.15) refers to 'gestalt' rather than perspective to make the point: 'Peripheral vision integrates us with space, while focused vision pushes us out of the space making us mere spectators'.

The visual, Figure 7a, and further development of the question of void space on a tracing paper overlay, Figure 7b, provides some indication of iconography, indexicality and conventionality of polysemiotic communication, the cursorily rendered '*present image*', a sense of the artist's bodily projection into the drawing's space, and the opening or unconscious deference towards what Pigrum, as cited above, suggests as a '[...] gap between potentiality and actualisation in transitional notation [...]'].

Consequently, this visual may be considered the most pivotal between the cited theory and its practical application. While roof shapes are fairly obviously signified, many of the marks read simultaneously as part shapes of elements as yet insufficiently stated, and as indexical of the artist's presence, as Stell, referenced above, has paraphrased of Ashwin.

Importantly, however, as suggested by Pigrum in 2, **Cognition, Semiotics, the Present image, and the Transitional Multimodal**, citing Kristeva, multimodality may also include a semiotics of the unconscious itself, which is not by definition a complete sign system but tends to work with the sensory signifier in and of whatever linguistic, visual or other-sensory language is involved. In artistic research, arguably one follows leads that are often encountered so reflexively that they may in their initial and even most charged manifestations

hardly be noticed. Reference to Kristeva suggests a more speculative directing element in the visuals: the oscillation of psychodynamic unconscious process at work within more conscious levels of cognition. Kristeva (1997: 35) interprets the original Greek meaning of *semiotic* as 'distinctive mark, trace, index, precursory sign, engraved or written sign, imprint, trace, figuration' through the filter of Freud's theorisation of the subject's instinctual drives. This does suggest the simultaneous projecting onto the observed vista a subjective indexicality that the works' viewer may still be able to deduce, and the author/artist's extracting from the observation elements that are so short-hand as to be mostly incomprehensible, for which reason written annotation helps fill in the gaps. The question may concern whether it is possible to meet in the middle, as it were, with the conclusion that the visuals are evidence of personal and individual interaction between the author/artist, as *subject* as much as observer, and the observed motif. The annotations on the visual, Figure 8b, many of which are nouns + noun possessive grammatical structures, confer with a reading less than deeply instinctual, yet veering towards individual subjectivity. Arguably, Figure 12a is a cogent example of the indexical *visual* semiotic found ad hoc in the public urban environment, where the linguistic term *growing into* might describe how the image basis of the painted tree is extended by the chance comparison of it with the garbage bin.

In artistic research, arguably one follows leads that are often encountered so reflexively that they may in their initial and even most charged manifestations hardly be noticed. The photo-montaged visual, Figure 9b, that initially concerned playing with the idea of fresco simulation, by chance suggested an association between the cobbled footpath of which the dividing wall runs alongside, the other side of the road from the café, and apparent continuation of the footpath's perspective projections into the plane of the drawing via the latter's blocks of handwritten text. A further chance association, Figure 10a/b, concerns a comparison of the digital photomontage with an aspect of design of the external concourse of the Casa da Musica. Visually and formally, the seats' design and context is echoed in the fresco wall mock-up, first shown as Figure 9b.

The operations of chance can of course have both positive and disruptive influence. Moati (2014, p.



106) states of Derrida's view of the unconscious that it has the potential to be split off from any human agency and occupy language itself, doing its subversive work 'from the inside' without being seen from the outside as any 'distinct psychic instance'. This is interesting in terms of the gaze, for example, as possibly a two-way reciprocal process, although what either triggers the looking, or looks back, can be operating on a wholly unconscious level – theorised in comparable terms from the perspectives of phenomenology and psychoanalysis of Merleau-Ponty (1968) and Lacan (1981) respectively. If one is open to the possibility of psychodynamic unconscious process working within conscious awareness, such play with photomontage enables conditions for how the unconscious works in the Derrida sense in the domain of the visual-material. The Casa... roof as shown in the photomontage shown as in Figure 9a, for example, veers towards the ground as an undulating instead of flat plane, and in Figure 10b the depression of the concrete slab seats into the ground mimics the roof's skylights, the images' and their memory swinging through space and time to the research's vista, create chance visual and formal comparisons with the project sketches.

Merleau-Ponty (1968, p.139) states in the context of the 'chiasm' and the 'narcissism of vision' that one may feel oneself 'looked at by things': '[...] to be seen by the outside, to exist within it, to emigrate into it, to be seduced, captivated, alienated by the phantom, so that seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen'. According to Lacan (1981, p.72) on the 'scopic drive', the gaze in the visual drive pre-exists: 'I see only from one point, but in my existence I am looked at from all sides'. Insofar as these two quotes concern internal states that can affect cognition, this is on the side of the unconscious, where the indexicality as a semiotic characteristic of communication does its influential work mostly or wholly unbeknown to one, but is still able to elicit one's response. Once the possibilities of whatever suggest and propel transition are opened out, other chance encounters also appear appropriate within the new extended parameters. The Casa... roof itself, for example, as indicated in Figures 10c/d, 11a/b, and 13a/b, is in a certain sense hidden, as it were, in plain sight, for how it may be considered to cast an inclusive net across the entire vista, whose coordinate corners almost act as tentacles. This is indicated by hav-

ing stretched the Casa roof over a visual that concerns void space and a trajectory that links rooftops, overlaid digitally with what is in effect the roof's all-embracing blur, Figure 10c/d. The nearest vertex of the roof can and would then include its observer in its unconscious scenario.

While the complexity of Lacan's explanation of the 'scopic drive' is beyond the scope of the article, an idea that is given by it of *stain* as an indexical metaphor that blurs or muddies clarity is useful for suggesting that a transitional multimodal approach to drawing as looking for and exploring possibilities is necessarily indeterminate. Merleau-Ponty's afore-referenced chiasmic crossing and Lacan's citing of the stain, suggests that perception might almost tangibly place itself somewhere between the seer and the seen. The *stain* may be considered the stretching of the Casa... roof itself as a blur across the vista, indicated in the visual, Figure 10d, through the use of semi-transparency, recalling Pallasmaa's above-referenced 'gestalt', of a mode of vision that is more extensive and embracing than that of central focus. This represents a movement of the transitional multimodal in a more developmental direction out from the relatively static aesthetic of the drawn visuals, even while they do concern the perception of change. Such stretching of the roof, shown as Figure 11a/b, could, as indicated in Figure 13a/b, include at least two other viewing points, their layered combination thereby embracing three planar dimensions of the site's void space that one experiences temporally and carries with one as memories in the location that such a design may trigger. If the research were to continue, the possibility suggested in Figure 13a/b would now need to be taken back a few steps, as it were, in order to process it forwards without letting go of transition; in other words, without curtailing a perceptually-based developmental process by something overly conceptual.

## 5. Conclusion

The article presents some artistic research of the author/artist concerning an urban development site in Porto in the form of brief visual notation – the kind of drawing that one can do discreetly from a café – the contention being that such visualisation is informative of transitory questions of perception of a vista temporarily opened up by the site's development. The article opened by posing

the question of how subjective cognitive processes can be visualised that are inspired by potentially sharable visual perceptual events. The presented visual notations are in this sense a mediator for such sharing, where they have been considered not as purely transparent, but *creating* as much as communicating the observation that they embody. The discussion has involved reference to cognitive theory, theory of the transitional multimodal in visual practice, and issues relating to phenomenology and psychoanalysis. In the process, drawn visuals of the site have been presented that concern the observation of transitory perception. It has been suggested that whatever indication of the 'present' character of imagery – referencing Bergson – emerges from such perception is more likely to hinge on an indexical level of drawn mark-making and gesture than more highly rendered representation. A possibility may now have emerged that prompts further discussion on the question of how the use of more than one semiotic system and a developmental multimodal approach to visualising does itself visualise, and can assist the brevity and abstraction of indexical mark-making.

The visuals have been concerned not only with observing how the development site suggests new comparisons of the Casa da Musica roof with Porto's vernacular architecture, but have during their process suggested that the roof itself projects a *net* – reference is made to Lacan's interpretation of the gaze as a psychical *stain*, as the gaze – across what the author/artist has felt as a void space that extends towards and accommodates viewing vantage-point at the café. This is a reading of a facility of perception that concerns acknowledging oneself as *subject* within the midst of one's perception, and, as suggested in the article, may achieve some validation through consideration of unconscious theory.

As generational visuals for a project that could proceed further, the revelation that emerged from them of the cast net of the Casa... roof offers the beginning of a more developmental sense. As inferred by the last sentence of the discussion section, this would need to be more fully considered before rushing too hastily to conceptualisation. However, there is the seed-germ in this of a means of giving form to what has temporarily opened up as a void space of an urban site in its early stages of construction.

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