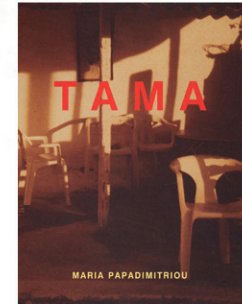


Fabiana de Barros



TAMA
Temporary Autonomous Museum for All
Maria Papadimitriou
catalogue pour 25th Biennial de São Paulo
Hellenic Ministry of culture

Peripteron de Cultur*

I conceived and designed the **Fiteiro Cultural** (Kiosk of Culture) to contain a utopia: the utopia of a cultural site which would be a non-locus but would be defined in terms of the community in which it has been erected.

It is a social sculpture proposed as a space provided to a community so that it can preserve, rediscover or re-create its cultural links; in other words, it is a shelter against oblivion.

In Portuguese the word fiteiro comes from fitas, the ribbons used for decorating children's clothes in the past. In the old times the fiteiro was a street vendor who sold these ribbons. Today the same word is used in northern Brazil to describe a small stall which sells various things. It is the means of survival for a parallel economy and represents a very compact and ephemeral occupation of public space.

The **Fiteiro Cultural** is a co-operative artwork. The users are also the directors of their own knowledge and references, at the same time actors and viewers of what they enact: their memories and desires. When the **Fiteiro Cultural** was invited to the exhibi-

tion "Playgrounds and Toys", organised by *Art for the World*, its function was crystallised in tune with the aims of the event, i.e. into providing to people who had lost everything with a space of simple and functional forms. According to the concept of the exhibition, the **Fiteiro Cultural** was proposed to the children in refugee camps with the aim of becoming adopted as a place of culture and education.

On that occasion I met Maria Papadimitriou, whose work had many things in common with mine. Her invitation on behalf of T.A.M.A. –Temporary Autonomous Museum for All– was an opportunity to explore a new direction for the **Fiteiro Cultural** through its relation with a nomadic population of Vlach-Rumanian Gypsies settled on the outskirts of Athens. The loose structure of this artistic non-locus can be occupied by people who also lack a specific place. The **Fiteiro Cultural** is inscribed into another utopia in the interior of the Museum for All, where space and usage remains unquantified and open to those who wish to use it. I was fascinated by the dynamics of the Fiteiro's function as

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part of the Museum for All; it was as if one non-locus within another one permitted all kinds of encounters to materialise.

So I arrived at a suburb of Athens to set up a **Fiteiro Cultural** which was promptly renamed into **Peripteron de Cultur** by the locals who use it.

The amazing reception, the way these itinerant people celebrated the **Peripteron de Cultur** and the rich experience from the brief contact with a community for which the only thing I knew up to that point was that it was foreign to me overthrew any plans I had about the **Fiteiro Cultural**: those people knew better than me what the **Peripteron de Cultur** was there for.

Along the process from the erection of the **Fiteiro Cultural** until its renaming by the community, a set of potential uses, educational and symbolic, gradually took shape. The **Peripteron de Cultur** as part of the T.A.M.A. enabled me to redefine the role of the **Fiteiro Cultural**. In Athens it confirmed the identity it carries inside in the form of a potential dynamic. This is especially significant to me as it happened through contact with a community which is exceptionally proud of its own identity.

* Peripteron de Cultur, in romani dialect, stands for Kiosk of Culture.

Fabiana de Barros, artist. Born in São Paulo. She has participated in many projects of the *Art for the World*. The **Peripteron de Cultur** is her most recent project. Lives and works in Geneva and São Paulo.

