

The role of cultural value in sustainable heritage reuse - the intervention on Teatro Thalía in Lisbon

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Abstract

Currently, reusing built heritage rather than constructing new buildings represents a significant step forward in reducing excessive resource consumption. Therefore, these architectural interventions in the city can counteract such phenomena by avoiding large-scale demolition and supporting more thoughtful urban planning. In this vein, Portuguese architecture has understood heritage intervention as a means of contextualising history and vernacular influences in favour of contemporary and recognised architecture. It is crucial to verify whether cultural assessment plays a sufficiently relevant role in these procedures within this process of architectural renovation. For this reason, the intervention on the Teatro Thalía in Lisbon (2012) by Gonçalo Byrne and Barbas+Lopes is critically examined from a values-based approach in order to answer the question of whether cultural assessment has been a key factor in determining design strategies.. This dialogue between the heritage project and the design process takes place in a cyclical process that begins with the application of four actions: framing, documenting, acting and contrasting. Transversal to the application of these actions is the action of assessing, which takes on a central role in the methodology. When applied to the case study, this process demonstrates how cultural valuation acts as a guarantor of the quality of the intervention, since the study of the attributes of the property and the values it embodies is a source of information that ensures the preservation of the property's identity.

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1. Introduction

“It is often said that Portugal is a traditionalist country. Nothing could be further from the truth. Continuity is maintained or safeguarded by inertia or the instinct for social preservation, among us as everywhere else, but tradition is not that continuity; it is the innovative acceptance of what has been acquired, dialogue or combat within its walls, above all a creative inner affiliation” [1].

Following these words, it could be said that Portuguese architecture is based on tradition, which has evolved over the years in a constant search for its identity, understanding it as the support for a contextualisation of history and vernacular influences in favour of a contemporary and recognised architecture. An architecture

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capable of recognising in this tradition the inhabitants of other times in that same place, events linked to the physical support in which they occur, to the place... and understands the materialisation of these events in anonymous constructions as a point of recognition of many of the most inspiring architectures.

Despite the awareness shown by Portuguese architecture with regard to heritage intervention, particularly since the Faro Convention (2005) and its quest to enhance the value of cultural heritage through its study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation, it is crucial to ascertain whether cultural assessment has played a sufficiently significant role in these architectural procedures during the process of renovation and development of Portuguese architecture in recent years. This is done by defining cultural assessment as the systematic process of identifying, analysing and interpreting the values that a community, a social group or society as a whole attributes to a heritage asset, with a view to providing a basis for its conservation, management and intervention. Therefore, after analysing the main specific databases (Avery Index, ProQuest, Scopus, etc.), it can be seen that cultural assessment appears in very few results as a guarantee or variable to be taken into account in the quality of heritage intervention in Portugal. This occurs despite the need of cultural heritage managers to ensure that practices and methods used in heritage management remain appropriate and, when they are not, review them in order to effectively protect the cultural heritage assets under their care [2].

These words suggest that, although we are increasingly aware that the introduction of cultural assessment into heritage interventions is still a pending task that the architectural discipline must incorporate into the design process. This quote highlights the current need to bridge the gap between theory and practice in architectural restoration. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a dialogue between heritage studies and heritage intervention design processes that places heritage value at the centre of the process.

That is why this article aims to critically analyse the 2012 intervention on the Thália Theatre in Lisbon by Gonçalo Byrne and Barbas+Lopes to see, from a theoretical point of view, whether the role of cultural values has been a key element in the heritage practice equation. This choice is the result of a broader investigation that generated an inventory of heritage intervention in Portugal, to which quantitative and qualitative selection criteria were applied to select this work, understood as an example of good architectural rehabilitation practice [3]. The study of this type of intervention highlights the value of adaptive reuse in the current context of climate crisis, where caring for what already exists and transforming rather than demolishing has a significant impact not only economically but also socially, given the value of the life of what has already been built [4].

2. Research method

The dialogue between the so-called 'heritage project' -understood as the methodological processes that integrates the historical, material, functional, territorial and social knowledge of a heritage asset through its cultural values in order to establish strategies for conservation, intervention, management and use- and the design processes carried out in the architectural rehabilitation explained above takes place in a cyclical process that begins with the application of four actions: framing, documenting, acting and contrasting. Transversal to the application of these actions is the action of assessing, which runs throughout the process:

Framing - Put the place, the city, the site into context. This involves linking the building to its regional, urban and historical setting, as well as to the evolution of the city. This is done through documentation and the creation of maps result of an interscalar exploration of the object of study.

Documenting - Delve into the history of the building and study its different layers. An exploration of the interventions that the building has undergone from its origin to the present day is carried out in order to understand its spatial morphology and current state. Schemes, diagrams, planimetry, chronologies and other visual tools are used to facilitate the graphic and conceptual development of the original building.

Acting - Analyse contemporary intervention on heritage assets as its final layer. Based on the building's design strategy and its history developed from an architectural perspective, the underlying principles that have guided the intervention are identified. The architectural rehabilitation is analysed in depth, with particular emphasis on

the form of representation used in the Portuguese heritage context, known as *vermelhos e amarelos* (reds and yellows). This has a marked informative character, as it greatly facilitates the understanding and scope of the intervention in a graphic way.

Contrasting - Carry out a critical reflection, inserting the project's strategies or main pillars of the intervention into an international context of Charters and Recommendations. The intervention is analysed in terms of how it aligns with conceptual advances in intervention criteria from a heritage perspective.

Assessing - Identify the cultural values currently recognised in the monument. Based on their evolution over time and the initial classification made by Alois Riegl, the aim is to refine the description of these values, identifying both the attributes that embody them and the potential values that have been activated by the architectural intervention.

This appears as the backbone of this cyclical process, as it is key in all its phases and is the justification for this entire process of characterisation and heritage investigation, understanding cultural assessment as the basis for any heritage intervention. For this reason, throughout the methodological process, the various attributes of the heritage asset are identified in order to pinpoint the cultural values they embody, depending on the context in which they are studied. In this way, the final phase of the methodology allows for their categorisation according to the source or the stage of the process at which they are identified. In this vein, they are introduced within an international framework of guidelines and recommendations to measure and assess their role within the project strategies that have been developed. In this paper is carried out in parallel with the action of contrasting, offering an international overview of heritage intervention based on the theory of value.

Similarly, citizen participation is introduced as a highly relevant component in this methodology, due to the need for current social advances, as it is understood that heritage actions not only aim to ensure that the values of an asset are preserved, but also implicitly seek to improve the quality of life of the communities that use these assets, achieving greater social cohesion and a shared memory. In this way, the reuse and, therefore, recovery of these assets in an urban context contribute to the construction of the contemporary city [3].

The application of this type of heritage action methodology therefore needs to be constantly updated, as heritage as a concept is dynamic and evolving, meaning that the tools used in the development of all heritage processes must be constantly reviewed [3].

3. The case study: Teátro Thalía, by Gonçalo Byrne and Barbas Lopes

3.1. Framing - Lisbon, the growth of a city since the 1755 earthquake - the development of quintas and suburban palaces

Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, has been shaped since its origins by its historical and geographical position, linked to the sea. This relationship with the sea gives rise to a dichotomy in Lisbon. On the one hand, its strategic position in the Atlantic and its proximity to the Mediterranean have given the city the importance it enjoys today. On the other hand, it is also what led to its destruction, particularly due to the earthquake and subsequent tsunami that took place in 1755 [5].

Following the earthquake and tsunami of 1755 and the fire that broke out afterwards, Lisbon was completely reorganised in a process led by the Marquis of Pombal to rebuild the city. Developments in the late 18th and early 19th centuries centred on the historic and administrative centre, whilst the outlying areas to the north and north-west of the city retained a more rural and scenic character. These areas gradually became recreational spaces for Lisbon's aristocracy and upper middle class, establishing themselves as a region of country estates and suburban palaces. It was against this backdrop that the Quinta das Laranjeiras and the Palácio das Laranjeiras emerged, alongside which the Teátro Thalía would be built a few years later. This palace forms part of a network of suburban aristocratic residences that took advantage of both easy access to the centre of Lisbon and the availability of large tracts of land (Figure 1) [6].

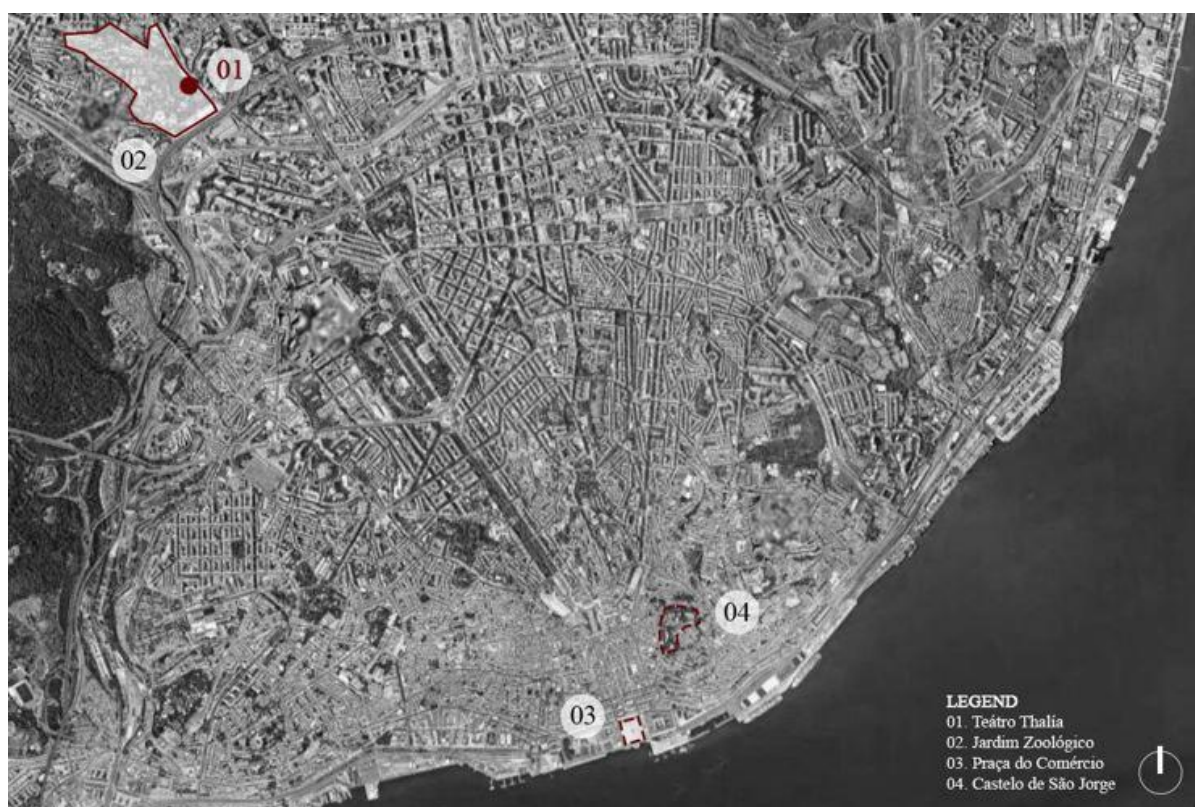


Figure 1. Location of Teátro Thalía, showing the peripheral location of the property, Lisbon, 2025

Source: Google Maps, 2025

3.2. Documenting - the creation of a neighbourhood and its transformation into a garden - Quinta das Laranjeiras

The current location of Teátro Thalía is on what was the Quinta das Laranjeiras, a space now occupied by the Lisbon Zoo, originally called Quinta de Santo António. It was at Quinta das Laranjeiras, now Lisbon Zoo (Figure 2), where the Count of Farrobo lived an intense life devoted to a wide variety of businesses and hobbies, from among which, the arts occupied most of his time. It was this passion that led him to build the Teátro Thalía next to the Laranjeiras Palace in 1820, dedicated to Thalía, the muse of comedy in Greek mythology. This building, where operas by the most prestigious composers of the time were performed, lasted just over 20 years, as it was renovated in 1842 by Fortunato Lodi, who also designed the Doña Maria II Theatre in Lisbon. The most remarkable aspect of this renovation was the design of the façade, which remains unchanged to this day (artistic value) [7] [8].

Table 1. Background of Teátro Thalía

Location	Laranjeiras street, 205	City	Lisbon, Portugal	Coordinates	38.74509, - 9.16912
Use	Theatre	Built area	1.600 m ²	Plot area	
Category	Monument	Typology	Theatre	Protection	Public interest prop
Transformations					
Period	Property	Use	Transformation		
1820-1843	Conde do farrobo	Private theatre	New building comprising three main sections and an adjoining two-storey residential building.		
1843-1862	Conde do farrobo	Private theatre	Reconstructed by fortunato lodi, specially on the entrance façade. It is also illuminated by gas. A new two-storey volume may be added.		

Location	Laranjeiras street, 205	City	Lisbon, Portugal	Coordinates	38.74509, -9.16912
1862-1940	Useless. In ruin state after a fire in 1962, which destroyed the theatre and the dance hall.				
1940-2010	State	Useless	In ruins. In 1978, orders were given to demolish the theatre's roofs and some of the adjoining buildings.		
2010-2026	Mctesp	Conference room, expositions,...	Work is being carried out to adapt the building to its new use. Later additions are being demolished and new structures are being added to accommodate the new programme.		

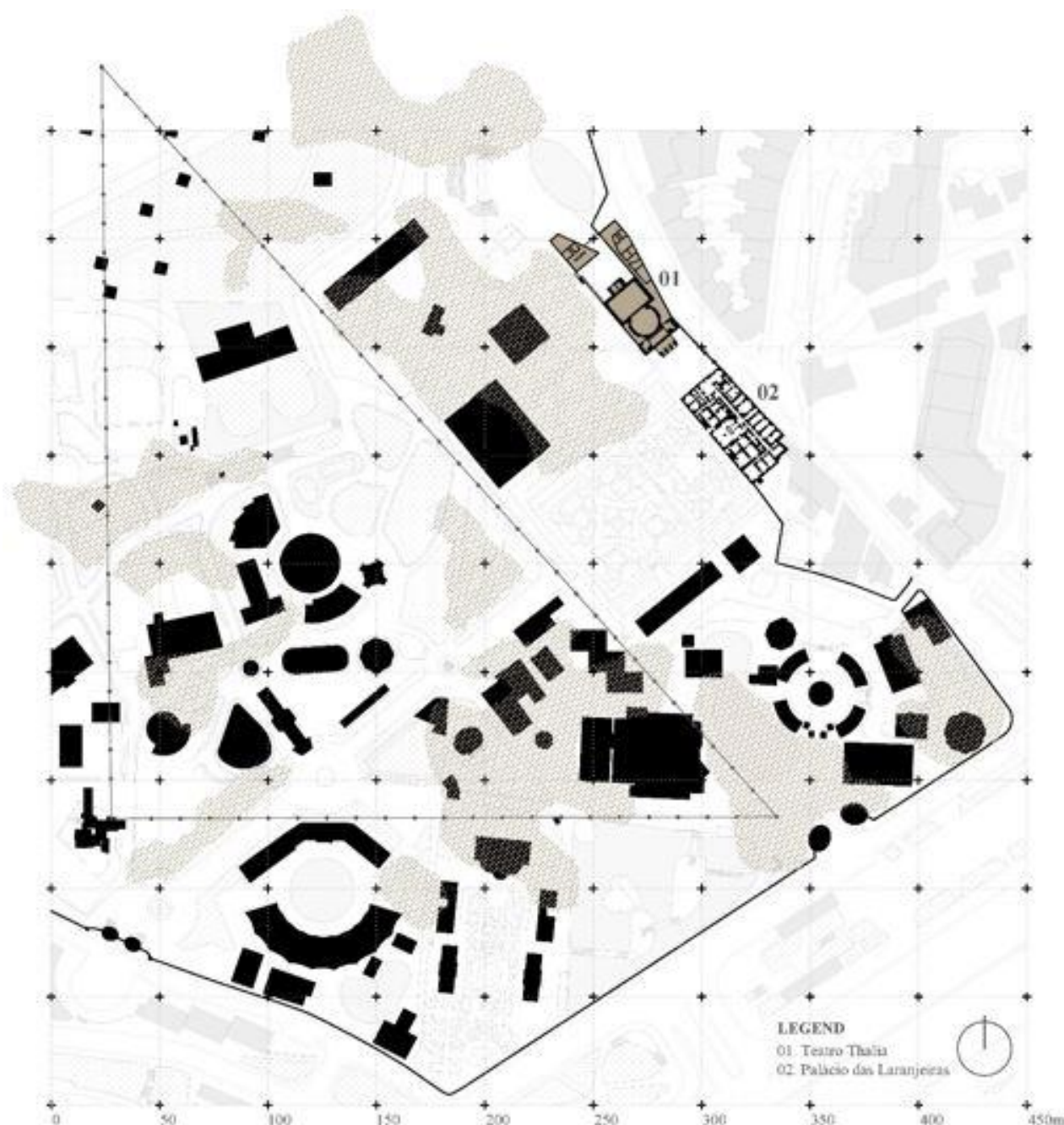


Figure 2. Location of the theatre and palace in the vicinity of the current Lisbon Zoo

Several years later, on 9 September 1862, a fire destroyed the theatre and the ballroom. No work was carried out on the complex from that moment until it passed into the hands of the State (1940), although the work focused mainly on the gardens and the palace, leaving the theatre once again to its fate. In 1978, the demolition of the theatre's roof and some annexes was ordered and carried out, further accentuating its ruined state. No

work had been done on the theatre since that day, leaving only the essential and solid beauty of the building (material value): the structures that made up the foyer, the stalls and the stage (Figure 3) (Table 1).

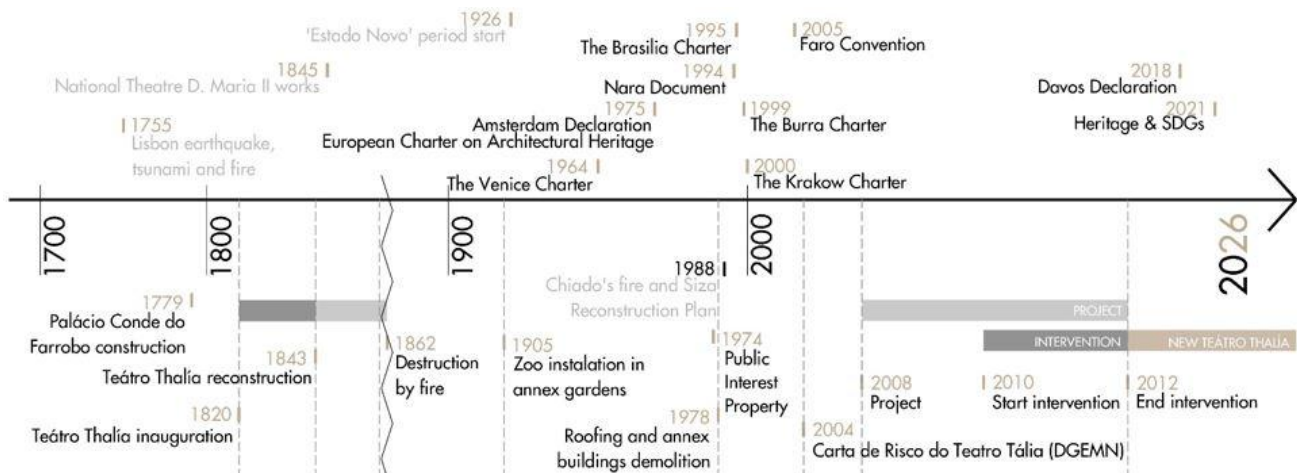


Figure 3. History of Teatro Thália interventions in the international context of letters and recommendations

Although nothing remained of the theatre's luxurious dressing rooms and ballrooms, what was left encapsulate the identity of what it once was, and what was no longer there was perceived in its absence [7] [9]. The original construction had two floors in its entrance section, with an additional height at the cornice. Following neoclassical lines, access to the building was via a podium, which led to a neoclassical façade with seven openings (Figure 4). On this 20-meter-long façade, four Doric columns support a triangular pediment with a flat tympanum, on which stands a statue of Erato, muse of choral and love poetry in Greek mythology. The acroteria feature two urns, and in its extensions, on plinths raised from the peristyle, four stone sculptures representing sphinxes reclining. According to reviews, the theatre was of a modest, almost domestic size (around 560 spectators), but had a box seat of considerable size, which highlighted the flexibility and capacity of the stage machinery (Figure 5) [8] [7].



Figure 4. Elevation and image of the theatre's south façade prior to the intervention. DGEMN, 1991

Source: SIPA, accessed on 24 June 2025



Figure 5. Ground floor of Teatro Thália and its annexes prior to the intervention. DGEMN, 1991

Source: SIPA, accessed on 24 June 2025

3.3. Acting - the consolidation of ruin - the project by Gonalo Byrne and Barbas+Lopes

3.3.1. Concept - uncovering the past to represent the future

‘The power of emptiness, a building stripped of all artifice and recovering the abstract values of time.’ [10].

The sobriety of a building destroyed by fire reveals a resistant skeletal system that has been able to stand the test of time. The imposing nature of a structure with a striking materiality and tectonics, characterised by vertical lines. This is how this building presents itself before the intervention. The ruin as a romantic element of persistence over time, seeking to resurface [11]. This is an example of architectural restoration that encapsulate the ruin, but with a clearly contemporary strategy. In contrast to the limited 19th century layout of domestic and leisure rooms, a sequence of more flexible and versatile spaces is proposed. There is talk of coexistence and overlap between the different activities that users of this building can carry out: from conferences, concerts or stage performances to smaller events such as seminars or work meetings. To this end, an urban strategy is implemented based on enhancing the theatre's connections with the public thoroughfare through its service areas. The main objective is to benefit and strengthen the relationships between the transit and leisure areas and the surrounding landscape: the gardens that made up the Quinta das Laranjeiras [12] [7]. This idea was based on preserving the existing historical fabric, reinterpreting it in a contemporary way but without losing its value. The main aim was to create large transitional spaces between the new and old fabric. The new construction is physically linked to the ruins, but they are two separate entities. In this search for new relationships, visual connections between the interior of the building and the Zoological Garden also appear, thus linking vegetation and monuments [12].

3.3.2. Materialisation of the idea

The action strategy proposed in the project is based on protecting the existing structures by maintaining the original performance spaces and adapting them to new uses: conferences, meetings, receptions, small concerts, and various types of stage performances. To this end, the ruins are being cleaned up, with the three original structures (atrium, stalls, stage) being preserved and the annexes that housed the more secondary and service elements being demolished, as it is understood by the project team to be elements that seriously compromise the interpretation of the building's main attributes, such as its verticality and volumetric composition. That is why, once the main original elements have been enhanced, a new volume is proposed to meet the technical needs of the new functions that the building will host (conciierge, toilet areas, storage rooms, technical spaces, cafeteria and support areas), as well as establishing new relationships with the landscape and the public spaces, always seeking the majesty of the monument from the outside. This idea of lightness and transparency in the new construction reinforces the strategy of enhancing the natural environment surrounding the building. For this reason, it forms a plaza that is elevated above the level of the garden, thus allowing for greater enjoyment of the vegetation and incorporating it into the intervention (Figure 6).



Figure 6. View of the elevated plaza from the back of the original volume, showing the building and its relationship with the surrounding natural environment.

This new volume is constructed as a uniform roof structure that shelters three bodies under which this new programme is divided. With a highly transparent envelope, it seeks to frame the original building and bring it into dialogue with the surrounding spaces, creating new interior-exterior relationships, transparency and reflections, weight and lightness, city and nature [7]. To preserve the existing structure, the stalls and stage areas are kept intact, conserving the exposed stone structure and solid brick walls in the condition they were in at the time of the intervention. This strategy is carried out with the aim of preserving the heritage value of the ruin. To this end, work is carried out on the floor, where all the installations run, so as not to alter the interior of the building. This flooring is made of polished concrete in earth tones, creating a sense of uniformity and continuity that contrasts with the roughness and irregularity of the masonry walls. With minimal installations, an arena is created that allows for flexibility and adaptation of the space to various functions [7].

In the new volume, because the vertical walls are made of glass or the original recovered structure, false ceilings made of sheet metal are installed, allowing the necessary installations to be routed to the most representative spaces of the building. In keeping with the intention to preserve the identity and character of the monument, the existing masonry and stucco of the atrium or foyer have been fully restored. The terracotta tone of the walls has therefore been maintained in the flooring, looking its extension in stone in the entrance peristyle, where the interior space is extended. Continuing with the conservation of the original building, another type of intervention on the ruin is worth noting, namely that carried out on the building's entrance. Here, contemporary techniques are used to offer solutions that seek to enhance the original style. For example, the fluted frieze at the entrance has been reconstructed, but with the introduction of innovative materials in this case, as it has been built using polyurethane foam mouldings. Stonework has also been carried out, in this case using lioz stone, thus also ensuring harmony with the environment. It was also necessary to restore some elements such as the peristyle and the marble sphinxes located at the entrance. As part of this work, the inscription “Hic Mores Hominum Castigantur”, meaning “Here human behaviour is punished”, was also replaced on the façade [13] (Figure 7).



Figure 7. image of the south façade after restoration

3.3.3. Materiality in the consolidation of the ruin

The proposal to renovate and expand Teatro Thalía involves heritage work on an existing building. For keeping the interior of the ruin intact and leaving the marks of time visible, the options for consolidating the structure were limited. The intermediate floors that originally existed had also collapsed, so there was an urgent need to brace the walls. There was no option but to carry out work on the exterior (Figure 8). This is how the strategy of enveloping the ruin with a new concrete skin came about, which created a new image of the pre-existing

structure and served to reinforce it. A strategy which may well seek to preserve the ruin from a romantic perspective, but whose outcome is quite far removed from the building's original design. This skin is composed of 22-centimetre-thick reinforced concrete walls anchored to the existing wall structure on the outside through holes in which steel rods were inserted and secured with epoxy resin, allowing them to work as a single, solid unit as well as serving as a support for the new roof, without the need for it to rest on the original walls.

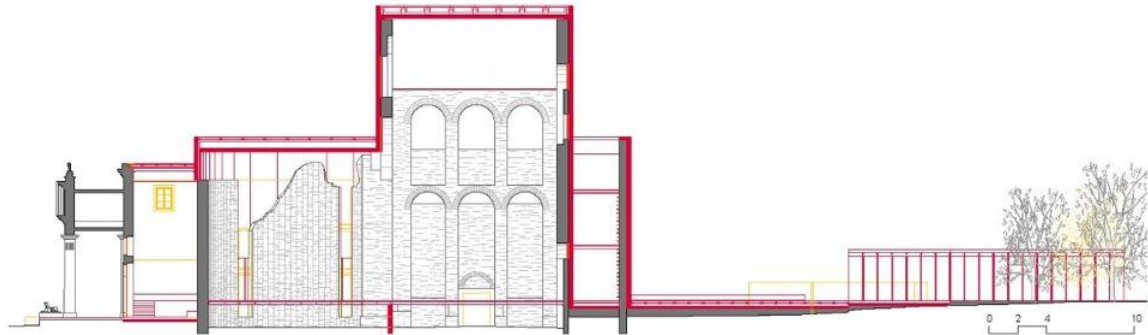


Figure 8. Longitudinal section of the intervention represented with red and yellow criteria (red: addition, yellow: demolition, black: maintained)

Source: the authors based on the office information

Therefore, in terms of execution, it could be said that in this case the ruins functioned as permanent formwork, as the proposed outer layer reconstructs the original structures, resting on them. In order to execute this complex construction solution, it was necessary to build a falsework that would shore up the existing structure while formwork the new one [13] [14].

With the idea of preserving the ruin through minimal intervention, earth-toned pigmented reinforced concrete with a texture similar to mortar was chosen to achieve an appearance very similar to that of the existing masonry (Figure 9). As this concrete is also used as a cladding for the façades, a technique known as ‘deactivated concrete’ is used, which achieves a rough and continuous final texture, where the joints are concealed. In this way, the entire intervention takes on a monolithic character. In addition, the same material is used for the new structures that have been added, which serve as support for the light metal structure that unifies the entire project, consisting of slender pillars made of steel profiles.



Figure 9. Image of the interior of the restored and consolidated existing building, showing the compatibility of the materials

As the interior was left virtually untouched, the necessary insulation was placed on the soffit of this new structure. Acoustic insulation made from paper pulp was sprayed onto the original walls [7].

Emphasising the value of traditional Portuguese techniques, this intervention advocates reinterpreting them to serve the project. For example, the reddish ceramic tiles, recommended by heritage regulations for roof finishes, as well as the traditional Portuguese stone paving, were replaced in the entrance peristyle with lioz stone. This decision was made with the aim of highlighting its geometry, as this volume stands as the main façade of the monument, while also alluding to what this place once was. This intervention strategy, together with the cladding of the consolidated main structures, achieves a sense of formal and perceptual unity, lending the project a certain timelessness, but it strips the building of the materiality and tectonics of the Portuguese architectural tradition, which situates the building within a specific historical context.

Finally, critically analysing the intervention carried out by Byrne and Barbas+Lópes, it could be said that they have followed a strategy of distinguishing between what already existed and what has been added, in line with the Venice Charter [15]. The aim is to maintain the main spaces, giving them a new use to ensure their persistence over time, but maintaining the structure and sequence of spaces of the original building –typological value- (Figure 10). A romantic vision of the ruin is embraced, keeping it intact and seeking functionality in its consolidation and preservation in its entirety. In contrast, a new delicate and evanescent volume is proposed, with a lightness and transparency that allows a series of visual connections between interior and exterior and promotes new spatial relationships, as well as evoking the old recreational buildings that once stood in Quinta das Laranjeiras, bringing back the presence of the past as a place for daydreaming, for fantasy, for creativity, but above all, for the city.

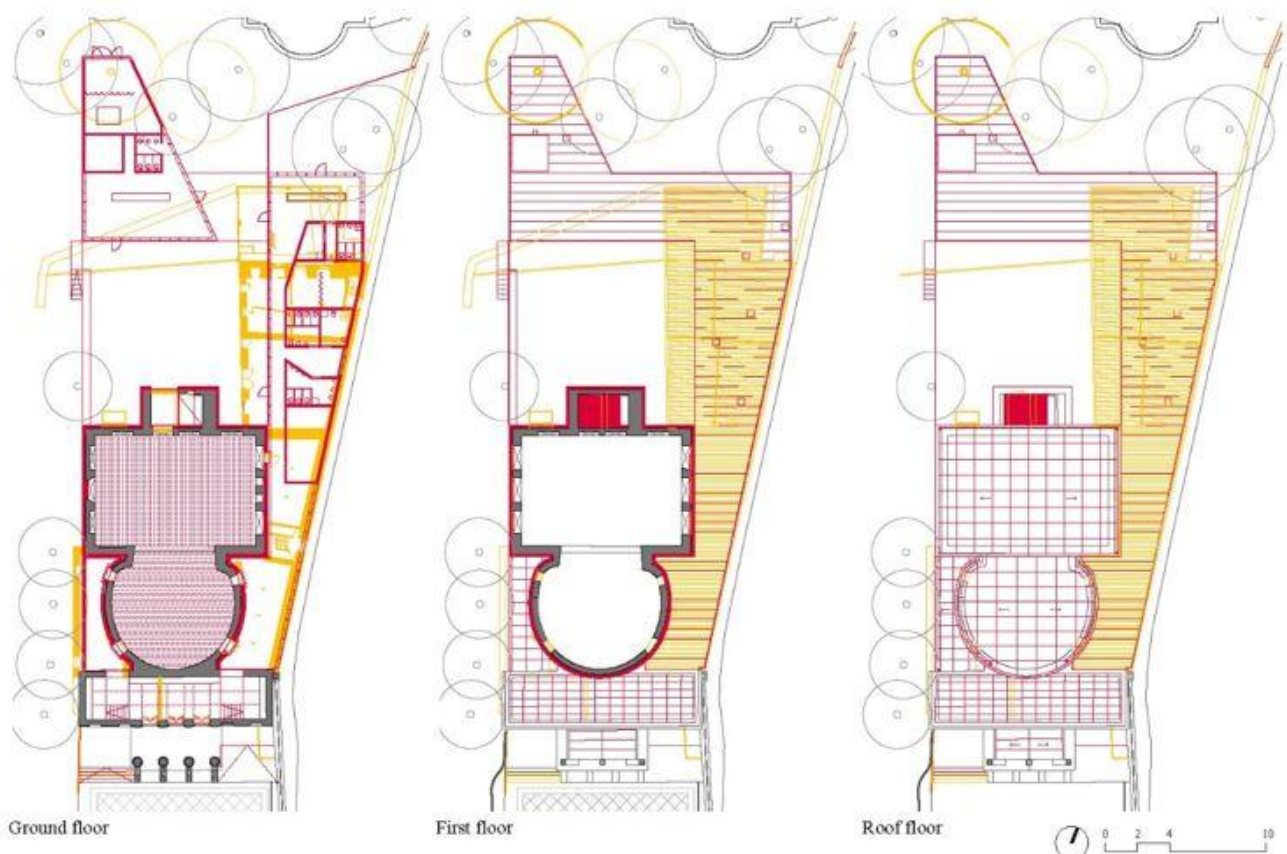


Figure 10. Plans of the intervention represented with red and yellow criteria (red: addition, yellow: demolition, black: maintained)

Source: the authors based on the office information

3.4. Contrasting and assessing - mapping cultural values through the introduction of the intervention in an international context

Reflecting on the complexity involved in determining and categorising the attributes that embody the different cultural values of a property and its architectural intervention, an approach to this task is made by listing the following values detected in the intervention on Teatro Thalía.

To this end, they have been grouped into three main categories. The values recognised by local heritage authorities for the classification of the monument will be accompanied by other cultural values, present both in the development of the intervention project and in the results of the project itself. The aim is to clarify which values are the starting point, which are activated during the intervention, and which are enhanced and generated after it. In addition, this process of cultural assessment is intertwined with international charters and recommendations (Figure 11), in order to obtain an overview of the intervention in the international context of value theory, understood as a theoretical framework, drawing on the work of Alois Riegl, based on the need to determine the heritage values of a cultural asset for the purposes of its protection and/or intervention.

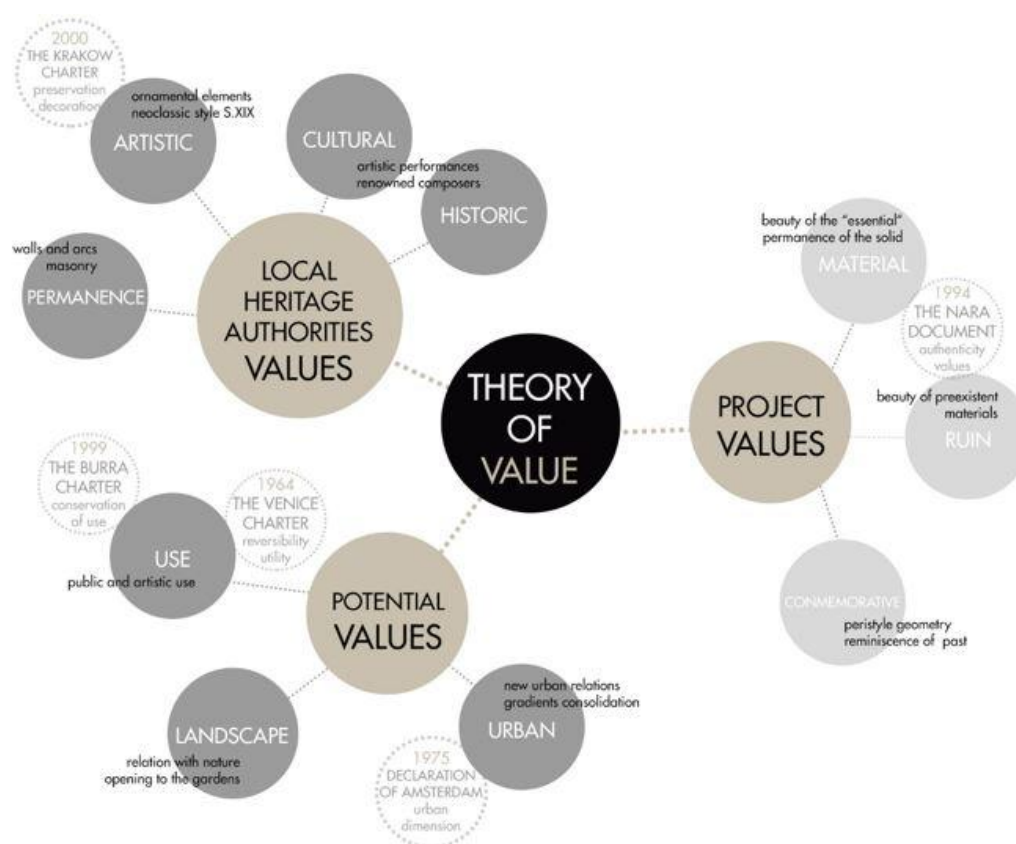


Figure 11. Diagram of the relationship of cultural values in the intervention, through their introduction to an international context by linking them with the International Charters

3.4.1. Values of local heritage authorities

The first set of values relates to the elements that the local authorities responsible for heritage conservation and intervention took into account in order to preserve the Teatro Thalía in its category of Building of Public Interest (IIP) alongside the Palácio dos Condes do Farrobo.

Artistic value [16-23]- This building has certain aesthetic and artistic characteristics that reflect the architectural and ornamental culture of the early 19th century. The building's aesthetic followed neoclassical lines mainly as a result of the first intervention carried out on the building just 20 years after its opening (1842) by Fortunato Lodi, a renowned architect of the time, author of other theatres of recognised artistic value in Lisbon such as Teatro Doña Maria II, and responsible for the neoclassical enrichment of the theatre's façade that remains to this

day. Maintaining this stylistic concept and the appearance it gave the building has been one of the main premises in the intervention. Another objective was to maintain the succession of spaces articulated by an axis of symmetry, which is reinforced in the project. It has advocated a restoration of the original state of the entire theatre entrance area, especially the architectural decoration, sculptures and other characteristic artistic elements, but using contemporary techniques and materials, with the aim of maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the building [24].

Historical value [16-19] [22, 23] [25-31] - It is a value that is usually present in all heritage assets as inherent to their existence. In this case, it is further emphasised as the legacy of a figure of notable relevance in late 18th and early 19th-century Lisbon, the Count of Farrobo. He was a public figure of the time, whose main interests included the performing arts, which led him to build a series of theatres in Lisbon. One of them was Teatro Thalía, one of the main leisure and meeting points for the Lisbon nobility. Furthermore, this building hosted performances of operas by the most prestigious composers of the era. This links directly with CULTURAL VALUE [16, 17] [28].

Value of permanence [17] - The materiality of the building in its original structure (mainly masonry walls and arches) is what has led to its permanence and/or continuity over time. It is a structure that is capable of withstanding the passage of time and the use of the building. This allows for the continued use of the building, which in turn ensures its survival. It is also what has allowed this architectural intervention to serve to accommodate a new use for the building or add a new layer to that palimpsest.

3.4.2. Project values

Secondly, and in response to the intervention on the theatre, the premises taken into account in the design process are analysed. For Gonçalo Byrne and Barbas+Lopes, the main strategy focused on recovering the values of time and ruin as a romantic and enduring element. These values, taking into account the attributes to which they refer, could be the following:

Material value [32] [33] - This intervention seeks to highlight the attributes that imply the beauty of the “essential”, the permanence of the solid, of that which remains. These attributes are embodied in the large masonry walls that surround the main spaces of the theatre, which in turn are those that have survived over time, whose tectonics, in materiality and form, remain as recyclable and reusable elements. Fire and the passage of time have been responsible for highlighting certain elements over others, demolishing some while maintaining others. It is these perennial elements that the architects have taken as a starting point for an intervention that keeps these elements intact, as they function as the shell of a container capable of housing certain uses which, updated over time, preserve the identity of the building.

Value of ruin - These elements, which have been cited in terms of their existential value, arrive at the moment of intervention in a state of total ruin. It is this Ruskinian vision of ruin that makes these vestiges appear as an element of permanence. Therefore, as a project strategy, it was decided to maintain them in their current state, as if frozen in time. In this way, it allows for an interpretation of the passage of time through the building, as well as stripping the architecture of all its ornamentation to leave only its skeleton, which hides its essence. These two values, and how their attributes have been integrated into the project, are carried out in a quest to maintain the identity and authenticity of the building, as stated in the Nara Charter [34].

Commemorative value [25] [18] [31] - One of the main premises of the intervention strategy was to highlight the geometry of the peristyle that shapes the main façade of the monument by introducing a series of variations on traditional Portuguese architectural techniques. This is reflected, for example, in the replacement of the traditional reddish curved ceramic tiles used in Portuguese construction as a roof finish and the typical paving stones used in urban pavements with lioz stone cladding. This unification of materials implies greater formal clarity and accentuates the concept of neoclassical access. The ultimate purpose of this decision is to allude to what this place once was and to highlight its value, bringing its majesty into the present and continuing the conception that was held at that time of this space.

3.4.3. Potential values

Potential values are those that arise in relation to the monument's current life and its capacity for evolution, i.e., the building is considered taking into account its potential values, which the intervention by Gonalo Byrne and Barbas+Lopes has activated and enhanced. These are dynamic and constantly evolving values, the result of the passage of time, which generate processes of enhancement and added value, creating an evolving image of the monument in terms of its relationship with the city.

Use value [17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 33] - This value, which could also be assimilated to typological value [22], appears to be linked to the concept of architectural typology. This stems, firstly, from the building's ability to continue to be used over time as one of the most sustainable and viable forms of conservation [15] [26]. Secondly, this theatre arises as a representative example of Italian-style stage. Today, two hundred years after its construction, the sequence of spaces initially proposed has survived and accommodated new uses similar to the original ones, demonstrating the reversibility and versatility of these spaces.

Landscape value [17] [19] [31] - It is considered to have potential value due to its direct and contemporary relationship with the landscape in which it is located. The form of the extension is nothing more than the result of a formal quest to embrace the surrounding open space. It is the materialisation of the desire to bring the past interpretation of the site, the Quinta das Laranjeiras, now transformed into zoo gardens, into the present.

Urban value [17] [19] - Based on the concept of the historic urban landscape as the result of a process of stratification developed over time, the intervention is understood as the common thread linking several of these strata [35].

The new construction, with its lightness and transparency, arises from the desire to unify several urban fabrics from different periods: on the one hand, Te tro Thal a; on the other, the Quinta das Laranjeiras, whose neighbourhood traces remain today in the zoo; and finally, the contemporary urban fabric that surrounds them. A formal strategy that serves as a way of bringing together different fabrics under a contemporary architectural language.

4. Conclusions

Finally, in line with discussions on high-quality Baukultur heritage interventions and the SDGs, especially those focused on sustainable cities and communities, it can be said that this renovation has been analysed with a view to seeking dialogue between built heritage studies and the architectural practice of intervention on it. It is therefore an intervention capable of helping to preserve and enhance local identities and shared cultural values, as well as the sense of belonging of the society that uses the building.

Furthermore, this building stands as an example of how heritage can function as a setting for community service infrastructure, attract tourism and fuel the growth of cultural and creative industries [36]. The detailed study carried out on the case study using the proposed methodology shows how each of the proposed actions – framing, documenting, acting and contrasting – analyses all the possible dimensions of the heritage asset – urban, historical, artistic, architectural, social, typological, in terms of use, etc. That is why, in the methodological process developed in this article, heritage assessment takes on a cross-cutting and, at the same time, structuring role in Te tro Thal a rehabilitation. It has acted as the guarantor of quality in this architectural intervention, insofar as the exhaustive study of the attributes of the property and the values it embodies have provided a fundamental basis of information to maintain the main relations between the building and its contexts, preserving its cultural significance. Understanding these elements, linked both to the original characteristics and subsequent modifications of cultural heritage and its meaning, is an essential requirement for assessing its integrity. The study of heritage interventions through value-based approaches, such as this one, defines a contemporary landscape of intervention in Portugal that draws on tradition, whilst placing it at the service of new languages which, moving away from architectural specificity, intervene in the country's built heritage to maintain its identity.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known financial or non-financial competing interests in any material discussed in this paper.

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Author contribution

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