

**CURATORIAL STATEMENT**  
**Virtual Exhibition**  
**“Staged Nature: Zoo of zoos”**

*Barcelona, Lisbon, Paris, Wien – October, 2020*

When we first approached the **“Staged Nature”** exhibition, we had a limited knowledge about zoological gardens, but an already consolidated opinion about them. **As architects, planners, landscapers, but mostly as citizens, tourists, humans, we agreed that the former model of zoos has no space in our contemporary cities anymore. But what’s next?**

The entire virtual exhibition **“Staged Nature: ZOO OF ZOOS”** is an opportunity to discover the zoological gardens’ genesis and evolution, and to raise the question of their role in our contemporary cities. The exhibit's structure is continuously playing on the dichotomy **architecture and function**. During the design, we followed three main steps: **analysis, observation and proposal**. Indeed, each of them finds a correspondence in one exhibition block: **past, present and future**.

The **PAST** block hosts the **analysis results** and it aims to **interpret the original project by Raul Lino**, which gathers elements of architecture, urbanism, landscape architecture and decorative arts. The **Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Art Library** hosts more than 500 original drawings of the project, including plans, technical construction details, reports and letters. Visitors will be guided to **discover Raul Lino’s world and the Lisbon Zoo history** by architect **Paulo Manta Pereira**, professor of architecture **Paula André** and Raul Lino’s grandnephew **Martinho Pimentel**.



The **PRESENT** block – which results from direct **observation** – intends to understand the zoo of today. First, we've **created an architecture itinerary to discover the original pavilions** and their current use. We've then focused on what the Zoological Garden of Lisbon means for local citizens in terms of personal and **collective memory**. To address those issues, we've interviewed biologist **Pedro Beja**, economist **Filipa Saldanha**, architect **Lucinda Fonseca Correia** and geographer **Eduardo Brito Henriques**, and discussed many ethic, social, economic and environmental issues involved. In this way, we want to **provide the visitors with the critical tools for taking a stand**.

Finally, in the **FUTURE** block, we envision the previous discussions into **possible development scenarios** of the Lisbon Zoological Garden. How will it be the zoo of the future? Will it still exist? And how it will look like? **Three/Four “Postcards from the future”** materialize the reflections and speculations of the many people involved in this project and, hopefully, they can represent a starting point for future discussion.

**“Staged Nature: Zoo of Zoos”** questions the canons, meanings and forms of the traditional zoological gardens and it claims the need of an **urgent transformation**, in terms of concept, structure and objectives.

We hope you enjoy this exhibition as much as we did, and that it generates new ideas, feelings and opinions towards the meaning and role of zoological gardens.

**And you, why do you stare at animals?**

The curatorial team  
**Enrico Porfido and Claudia Sani** – *pais(vi)agem*  
**Arian Lehner and Theresa Margraf** – *Mies. TV*

