

# GULBENKIAN PROGRAM PROXIMO FUTURO

Emílio Rui Vilar

Following on from the experience already gained with the Programmes “Cultural Forum: The State of the World” and “Distance and Proximity”, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is shortly to launch a new programme, this time with the name of “Next Future”.

This programme, which will last for a period of three years, means that we will continue to pay special attention to the cultural changes that are currently taking place in the contemporary world. Changes occurring not only at the level of creativity itself, but which are also related to the increasing mobility that has helped to shift the location of the centres of innovation and has led to the emergence of new countries and cities with important roles to play in cultural production.

This also means that our aim is to continue to develop innovative avenues for the Foundation’s cultural and artistic activity, which will operate alongside our already established forms of intervention.

Today, after the polarisation of Europe and the North Atlantic, it is clear that new generations of creators have appeared, developing their work in other registers and in other societies, where very diverse traditions have become mixed with the possibilities opened up by the new technologies in terms of communication, knowledge and interaction.

This is the case with the triangle of Europe-Africa-Latin America and the Caribbean, where the post-colonial reality has opened up new perspectives, both locally and through the diasporas that have established a new relationship with the previously dominant patterns and carry with them a new energy of affirmation and recognition.

Because of its history and the recent experience of welcoming migrants from multiple ethnic and cultural origins, Portuguese society now enjoys a special opportunity to develop a critical mass that favours the understanding of new phenomena, contributes to mutual understanding and benefits new dimensions of interculturality.

Besides the experience that is now being gained of new cultural expressions and the investment being made in new generations of creators, this new programme, just like the previous ones, contains a sizeable component of criticism and theory, namely through the links that have been established with the master’s degree and post-graduate programmes of higher education institutions, in the areas of Social and Human Sciences and Cultural Studies.

When the situation that we are currently living through obliges us to rethink our behaviour in a responsible search for new models of sustainability, the vibrancy and vitality of the experiences of emerging societies may be precisely the breath of fresh air that “brings in the future”.

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