

COIMBRA

ASA 2025

COIMBRA
ARCHITECTURE
SUMMER ATELIER

Alphaville

designing
from
dystopia



Coimbra Architecture Summer Atelier is an intensive workshop organized by the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra, Portugal. Combining practical and theoretical modules, CASA proposes to investigate the built environment from an architectural, urban and social perspective, taking Coimbra as a contemporary artefact of reflection and intervention.

Immersed in an atelier environment under tutor guidance, students and young professionals are challenged to develop design strategies that address proposed cyclical concept themes. A theoretical component is added to this programme through informal sessions and debates, where concepts, ideas and projects are discussed so as to stimulate the design process.

CASA provides a *forum* for architectural experiment, the lively exchange of ideas, sharing of knowledge and promoting of a cultural space. Participants will find here a dynamic and interdisciplinary space for interaction with dedicated professionals of contemporary architectural practice, as well as renowned academics committed to teaching and research in this field.

Embracing diverse nationalities, cultures and learning processes, CASA intends to promote the exchange of practices, experiences, and ideas across generations, having as its main goal the creation of innovative design proposals for Coimbra.

COORDINATION

Luís Miguel Correia
Martinho Araújo

CASA

CASA 2025

COIMBRAAlphaville

designing from dystopia

Nuno Grande

In 2025 it will be 60 years since the auspicious premiere of 'Alphaville', a film by Jean-Luc Godard that became one of the symbols of the *Nouvelle Vague*, the french movement that revolutionized the European cinema in the 1960s and 1970s. In the film, as in the movement itself, there's a scathing critique of the modern, technological and motorised civilization built and glorified since the II post-war, and consequently of the functionalist urbanism and the *ex-novo* architectures that then spread across various suburbs. The same theme would reappear in other works by François Truffaut — 'Fahrenheit 451' (1966) — or Jacques Tati — 'Playtime' (1967) and 'Trafic' (1971). Godard's film is, in fact, a disenchanted portrait of a modern utopia transformed into an urban dystopia, where women and men are subjugated by the perverse power of an artificial intelligence of their own invention. 'Alphaville' portrays a dark, tense, misogynistic, almost post-human and eminently motorised environment, where collective space is transformed into a technocratic, zoned, privatised, 'algorithmized' enclosure — after all, not too distant from today's world.

In the 1960s, Coimbra was also living its modern utopia, previously outlined in the plans of Étienne de Groer (1940) and Antão de Almeida Garrett (1955), supported by good demographic and motorization indexes, and materialized by the construction of new residential neighborhoods, initiated after the extensive demolition of the "Alta" (Uptown) area, and the migration of its inhabitants to the new suburbs: Vale do Calhabé, Montes Claros and Conchada. These were also the places where a "new wave" of architects — Alberto Pessoa, Carlos de Almeida, Manuel Teles,

Jorge Albuquerque, Rogério Alvarez and Vasco Cunha —together with many other engineers — António Barata Portugal, Carlos Mendes Veloso, Rui Castro Pita and José Luís Azevedo — were able to dream up the modern city that was overdue, around the old traditional center. Over the course of that and the following decades, Coimbra saw the dispersed growth of new urban axes, apartment blocks and towers, surrounded by interstitial spaces, many of which provided access to underground and ground floors for the automobile – the modern family’s device for bourgeois emancipation. But even then, the so-called *Cinema Novo* — the Portuguese version of the *Nouvelle Vague* — denounced the phenomenon of suburbanization (of Lisbon), as in Paulo Rocha’s film ‘Os Verdes Anos’, released in 1963, curiously two years before Godard’s film.

More than half a century after the creation of this modern Coimbra, many of the valuable utopian and emancipatory architectures of the time are now surrounded by uncharacteristic spaces, arbitrarily crowded with cars or privatized by condominiums and residents; in other words, this modern city has become a kind of *COIMBRAIphaville*. Just when the city is about to inaugurate a new peri-urban public transport system — MetroMondego — and is also betting on soft mobility, when teleworking and online commerce are changing commuting patterns — utopia for some, dystopia for others — it might be interesting to (re) design this post-motorized city, taking advantage of the urban and architectural interstices left by the hypothetical disappearance of the private car. It’s not a political program against the car — which can become a sustainable and shareable device – or even the use of new technologies — which should serve us and not subjugate us; it’s simply a question of qualifying the space shared by residents and visitors, the neighborhood facilities and the local commerce, generating new

forms of collaborative habitat by ‘occupying’ the zoned and privatized spaces of the city. Ultimately, it’s about designing a possible future from that *COIMBRAIphaville*.

Thus, with the research project ‘Coimbra Nouvelle Vague’ on the horizon, the theme ‘*COIMBRAIphaville*, designing from dystopia’ is launched as the leitmotif of the CASA 2025 workshop. It will be organized around four fronts of analysis and proposal, to be tackled by as many groups of tutors and students. These are: (1) the Norton de Matos neighborhood, on the fronts adjacent to the ‘Caixas de Previdência’ buildings; (2) the Solum neighborhood, South front; (3) the Solum neighborhood, North front; (4) the Fernão Magalhães Avenue, West front. On these fronts, and based on an analysis of the plans and sections of the underground, ground and standard floors of the respective neighborhoods, the four teams will be asked to design a more cohesive, porous and humanist city, creating new opportunities for relationships between residents and collective spaces. To do this, and without distorting the architectural authorship that defines these neighborhoods, the teams will be asked to find new ways to re-naturalize the current car parks and to establish urban and architectural links between the underground floors (where they exist) and the ground floors, transforming them into spaces for new cohousing, urban facilities and recreational uses.

Ultimately, this workshop is about giving the city back to the citizens.



ATELIER TUTORS

Andreia Garcia+Diogo Aguiar
Joana Couceiro+José Cabral Dias
Paula Del Rio+João Branco
Nuno Travasso+Ivo Poças Martins

SESSION LECTURERS

Debate Session #1 – Living in Alphaville

Armando Rabaça
Luís Miguel Correia
Nuno Correia
Nuno Morais
Susana Lobo
Rui Lobo
Rui Silva

Debate Session #2 – Picturing Alphaville

Joana Couceiro
José António Bandeirinha
Luís Urbano

30 jun–7 jul
2025
dARQ
Coimbra

CALENDAR

30 MON

09:00 Participants welcome
and briefing with CASA
Coordination

09:15 Opening session
CASA 2025 “COIMBRAAlphaville —
Designing from Dystopia”
with Scientific Coordinator
Nuno Grande

10:00 Departure to site visits

14:30 Debate Session #1
— Living in Alphaville

17:00 Coffee break

17:30 Debate Session #2
— Picturing Alphaville

1 TUE

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

2 WED

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

3 THU

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Intermediate group
Presentations

4 FRI

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

5 SAT

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

6 SUN

09:00 Workshop
14:00 Workshop

7 MON

09:00 Workshop
14:30 Final presentations
with guest critics
18:00 Workshop closing
and diploma ceremony
20:00 Closing dinner

FEES

The fee for attending the summer atelier is 25€.

The fee includes:

- Intensive participation in a 8 day workshop and sessions;
- Closing dinner;
- Studio material and printing expenses;
- 24/7 studio access;
- Student kits (dARQ books, CASA booklet and credentials, notebook and pen, map of Coimbra);
- Certificate of participation.

The fee does not include:

- Travel expenses to and from Coimbra;
- Meals and accommodation;
- Local transportation outside of studio working hours or CASA programme.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

To apply, please access the following link:

www.uc.pt/fctuc/darq/casa/

The filled application

form should be sent to:

coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt

The deadline for applications is 15/06/2025.

CASA 25 has a limited number of places available, the enrollment procedure will close once 30 applications are confirmed. Payment of the course fee will only be requested after the application is reviewed and considered eligible for participation. This can take up to one week, depending on the number of applicants. If the application is successful, CASA team will send a confirmation email along with payment details and other information. Each applicant has a period of seven days to pay the participation fee once the confirmation email is sent. Registration will only be valid after payment confirmation.

Cancellation policy:

If the cancellation request is sent before 15th of June, half of the participation fee will be refunded. Applications cancelled after this date will not be refunded.

DISCLAIMER

Each participant is responsible for ensuring that they have a safe stay in Portugal and should arrange their own travel and health insurance. CASA team is not responsible for any type of accident or damage, property or healthwise, that may happen during the workshop.

USEFUL INFORMATION

The city center of Coimbra, where the University is located, is a dynamic and diverse area with numerous restaurants, bars and accommodation possibilities, such as hostels, guesthouses and more, all with an affordable pricing.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- www.uc.pt/en/fctuc/darq/
- www.uc.pt/en
- worldheritage.uc.pt/
- www.lonelyplanet.com/portugal/central-portugal/coimbra
- visit.uc.pt/en/about/

FAQS

Where will the workshop take place?

CASA will be held at the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra.

Address:

Departamento de Arquitetura

Edifício Colégio das Artes,

Largo D. Dinis

3000-143 Coimbra

In which language will the workshop be held?

Both the workshops and sessions will be held in english. CASA team does not require participants to present a language certificate, however, we strongly recommend a good level of fluency.

Are there any specific requirements for participation?

CASA mainly aims to architecture and urban planning students or recent graduates. A strong command of both hand drawing and computer drawing skills is advised.

Do I need to bring my laptop?

Each participant should bring their own laptop. Drawing paper, cutting tools, rulers and other supplies will be provided. Nevertheless, we encourage each participant to bring their own drawing materials, such as pencils, pens and others.

Will I be granted a diploma/certificate of participation?

Upon successful conclusion of the workshop every participant will be given an official diploma of participation signed by the CASA representative and the Department of Architecture director.

How will I get notified if my application is successful?

CASA team will send a confirmation email informing each applicant whether his application was successful or not.

Will there be access to wifi?

During their time in the Department of Architecture, participants will have free access to Wi-Fi provided by the University server.

When is payment due?

The applicant will be asked to pay for the course fee once his application is confirmed and accepted, this is done via email, where payment instructions are also sent. Registration will only be valid after payment confirmation. Payment deadline is 15/06/2025; Applications submitted in the 15th of June will have extra time for payment. The application form should be filled and sent to CASA: coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt

Will CASA be responsible for issuing my VISA?

Each participant is responsible for obtaining their own VISA. For invitation letter purposes, please inform the team during your application procedure.

coimbratelier@uc.pt
uc.pt/fctuc/darq/casa

 coimbratelier

 @coimbratelier

TEAM AND SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION
CASA 2025

Nuno Grande
Luís Miguel Correia
Martinho Araújo

ORGANIZATION



PARTNERS



SPONSOR



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