

ALVARO

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TAKING AWAY SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

Someone who sets off to visit a building by Siza knows what to expect. In their heart they have expectations and illusions, but will also be certain that they will encounter a mature and consistent piece of work. There exists around the work of the great masters a certain aura, a circle of adulation, which transports it out of the commonplace. But that aura rests generally on very simple presumptions. And the simplest is, quite often, the most difficult. The solutions found by Siza, which were most certainly unearthed after arduous research work, seem obvious to the eyes of the visitor: the building is sited where it should be; it gives form to the brief as it should, and does so elegantly; it embodies the markers that best resonate with a given cultural memory. Which is doing a lot, but this is not everything. There are other buildings and urban projects that respond efficiently to all these matters but still do not justify a visit.

Why then are Siza's works worthy of a visit? And why are some more so than others? It is because they manifest, I think, a thing that some architects possess and others lack: poetry. Poetry in architecture and in art generally, is not something that is easy to see, though it does belong to the realm of sight, but not only so. Poetry is seen, felt, heard, and touched. But in regards to sight or touch it retracts, it takes shelter behind its unassailable depths. When space is well ordered, it enters the senses like a God enters the soul. Architecture establishes a protocol, poetry breaks it; architecture will speak

up to a certain point, poetry will hush; architecture renders the world habitable, poetry offers hospitality; architecture acts upon the "flesh of the world", poetry manifests and impacts on the spirit; architecture constructs a form befitting utility, security, comfort, poetry invents a route East for reason.

For example, visit the Tidal Pools or the Museum of Serralves and see how Siza's work demonstrates knowledge and absence, two virtues that are usually found together. And this is poetry. Absence is not necessarily a lack of something or a deprivation. It is also a moment of waiting, a measure of the heartbeat of someone thirsty who approaches a fountain. The poetry in Siza's work never displays everything. It allows the visitor or the reader space for detachment and criticism; it creates an opportunity for questioning, for uneasiness and for surprise. Good architecture respects its visitor; it values him, gives him responsibility, matures him and works towards his emancipation. The visitor is not like a loose sieve, emotionally passive. The visitor gives oneself to the building and embraces it: either to espouse it, or to reject it. In either case, the visitor always takes away something to talk about!

Nuno Higino



At a time when there is so much "net surfing" and so much talk of globalization, the ability to 'know how to look at architecture', obliges one to travel, to see and feel a building, to understand it's context and its contemporaneity.

Architectural and general cultural tourism is an international and even a national phenomenon. Transport options are fast and affordable and even a weekend is enough time for a trip: there is a belief that in a short amount of time, a whole city can be

assimilated, not only its more traditional tourist attractions, but also the things that form and define it.

The Porto Region has a collection of contemporary architectural buildings, which due to their urban context, reinforces the existing cultural heritage. Contemporary Architecture is already accepted as part of the built heritage and in many cases is classified as "of cultural and tourist value".

The participation by various entities in this project – C. M. Porto (The Porto City Council), Ordem dos Arquitectos SRN (The Portuguese Council of Architects – Northern Chapter), Casa da Arquitectura – demonstrates the relevance of this phenomenon and the urgent need for its promotion.

Álvaro Siza began his work as an architect within this cultural context.

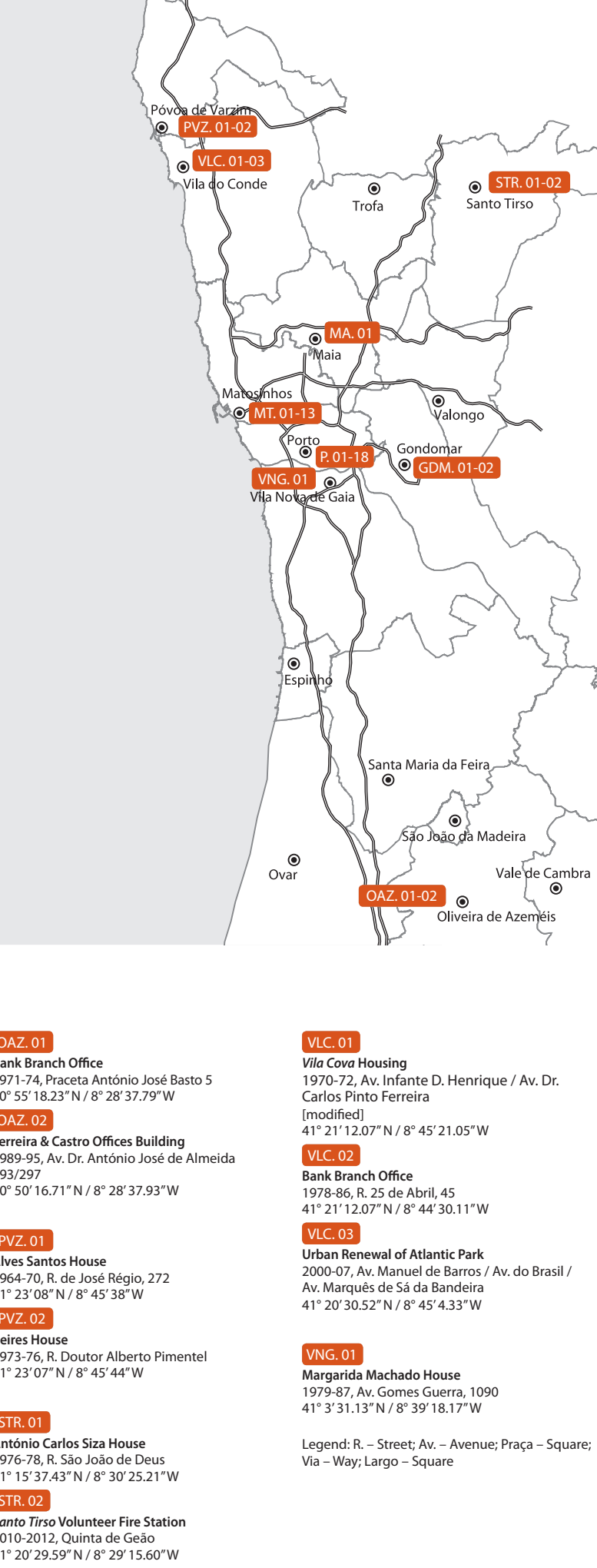
This map, dedicated to Siza's built work helps the visitor to find the buildings and indicates the best way to approach them. It follows other maps already published on Architects Marques da Silva and Arménio Losa.

Carlos Castanheira



- P.01**
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- P.02**
Lordelo Cooperative
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[modified]
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- P.03**
Manuel Magalhães House
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41° 9' 53.08" N / 8° 35' 33.16" W
- P.04**
Social Housing SAAL, Bouça
1975-77, R. das Águas Férreas
41° 9' 24.43" N / 8° 37' 5.29" W
- P.05**
Refurbishment of Quinta da Póvoa House and Outbuildings
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- P.06**
Carlos Ramos Pavilion – Faculty of Architecture
1985-89, R. do Gólgota
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- P.07**
Faculty of Architecture, University of Porto
1986-93, Via Panorâmica
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- P.08**
César Rodrigues House
1987-96, R. Corte Real, 681
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- P.09**
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- P.11**
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Co-authorship António Madureira
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- P.14**
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- P.16**
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Co-authorship Eduardo Souto de Moura
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- P.17**
São Bento Metro Station
2005, Av. Vimara Peres
41° 8' 43.89" N / 8° 36' 38.95" W
- P.18**
Tomb of the Poet Eugénio de Andrade
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Prado Repouso Graveyard, 2nd section
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- GDM. 01**
Luís Figueiredo House
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- GDM. 02**
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- MA. 01**
Rocha Ribeiro House
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- MT. 02**
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[partly built; modified]
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- MT. 03**
Siza Vieira Family Tomb
1957, R. de Sendim, Sendim Graveyard, 4th section
41° 11' 58.19" N / 8° 40' 26.9" W
- MT. 04**
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Co-authorship Adalberto Neves, António Meneres, Botelho Dias and Joaquim Sampaio
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- MT. 05**
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1958-65, Av. Antunes Guimarães
41° 11' 42.6" N / 8° 41' 13.1" W
- MT. 06**
Martins Camelo Family Tomb
1960, R. de Sendim, Sendim Graveyard, 2nd section
41° 11' 24.00" N / 8° 40' 25.8" W
- MT. 07**
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- MT. 09**
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- MT. 11**
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- MT. 12**
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41° 12' 8.75" N / 8° 42' 44.58" W
- MT. 13**
Plan for Leça da Palmeira Coast Road
2002-07, Av. da Liberdade / R. Coronel Hélder Ribeiro
41° 11' 35.37" N / 8° 42' 25.04" W



Legend: R. – Street; Av. – Avenue; Praça – Square; Via – Way; Largo – Square