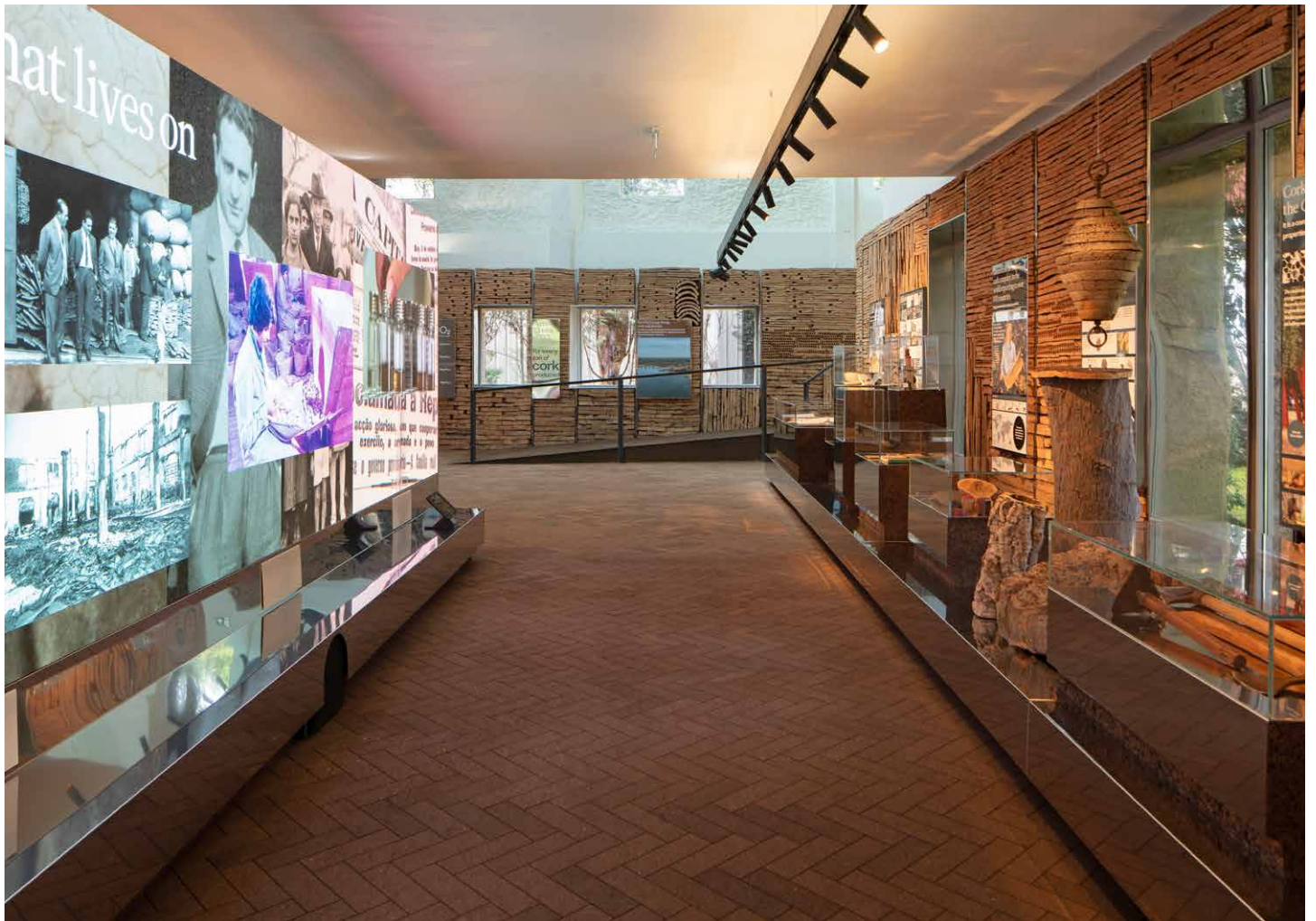


# AMORIM NEWS

YEAR 40 / ISSUE 3

## Heritage House: the Legacy and Future of Cork

Looking to the past, while forging the future. At the Heritage House these two timeframes are united in a unique way, with the splendour of cork and the history of Corticeira Amorim. A living museum that is both a memory store and an archive, and also an engine of creation and experimentation. It offers an immersive experience, designed to discover a unique raw material - including its history, present and future. If cork is nature and innovation, beauty and sustainability, it reveals itself here to be practically infinite in its capacity to surprise us and deliver new answers to global challenges. The doors are open. Shall we enter?



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## Heritage House: The greatest heritage is the future

A 150-year history cannot be forgotten. It must be renewed and projected into the future. That's what we wanted to do with the renovated Heritage House, by creating a unique meeting place between tradition and contemporaneity. To achieve this, we returned to our origins, while looking towards the future. We delved into the family archives, the history of Corticeira Amorim, the materiality of cork and opened our eyes to everything around us, in this place immersed in memories. We invited top professionals, who have proven track records in the fields of architecture and design, to help us design this space, to celebrate cork and, with humility, its profound connection to the Amorim family. We benefited from a precious and remarkable collaboration with Hugo Dourado's ColetivoMEL and Pedro Caride's Por Vocação, who developed the project in close liaison with our in-house teams. After almost three years of design - from initial sketches, which already contained all the inspiration and impetus of the space, to implementation - the end result is truly moving, because it fulfils the mission of elevating cork, while paying tribute to the Group's history and to a unique raw material, distinctly Portuguese and sustainable, which, thanks to Corticeira Amorim, has gained wings and taken over the world.

In a very unique way, Heritage House transcends the limits of a conventional museum or showroom, and highlights a deep-rooted legacy, spanning four generations of the Amorim family, always in favour of valuing cork as a natural and cultural heritage. More than a museum, it's a journey, a multifaceted story that unfolds at the pace and interests of the visitor's gaze. By combining history, culture and education, Heritage House transports us on a journey through the evolution of cork processing, combined

with the unique contribution of the Amorim family. The exhibition highlights the importance of the material, its past and its future, unfolding in a multiplicity of applications and revealing its intrinsic link to sustainability.

This is an immersive experience, that is made even more engaging by the omnipresence of cork - from the floor to the walls - always in harmony with the exterior and always emphasising cork's unique and exceptional characteristics. Based on tradition and expertise, Heritage House is also a space for innovation, where we can discover some of cork's most unexpected and transformative applications, and where we can directly experience the benefits of a material that, while preserving its authenticity and remaining true to its nature, is always capable of surprising us, of going further. If this is a house that aims to celebrate the importance of cork - yesterday and today - we aim to ensure that its legacy persists through time and extends into space, always in order to enhance this unique resource, expanding knowledge and preserving history. Always in complete awareness that the greatest heritage is the future.

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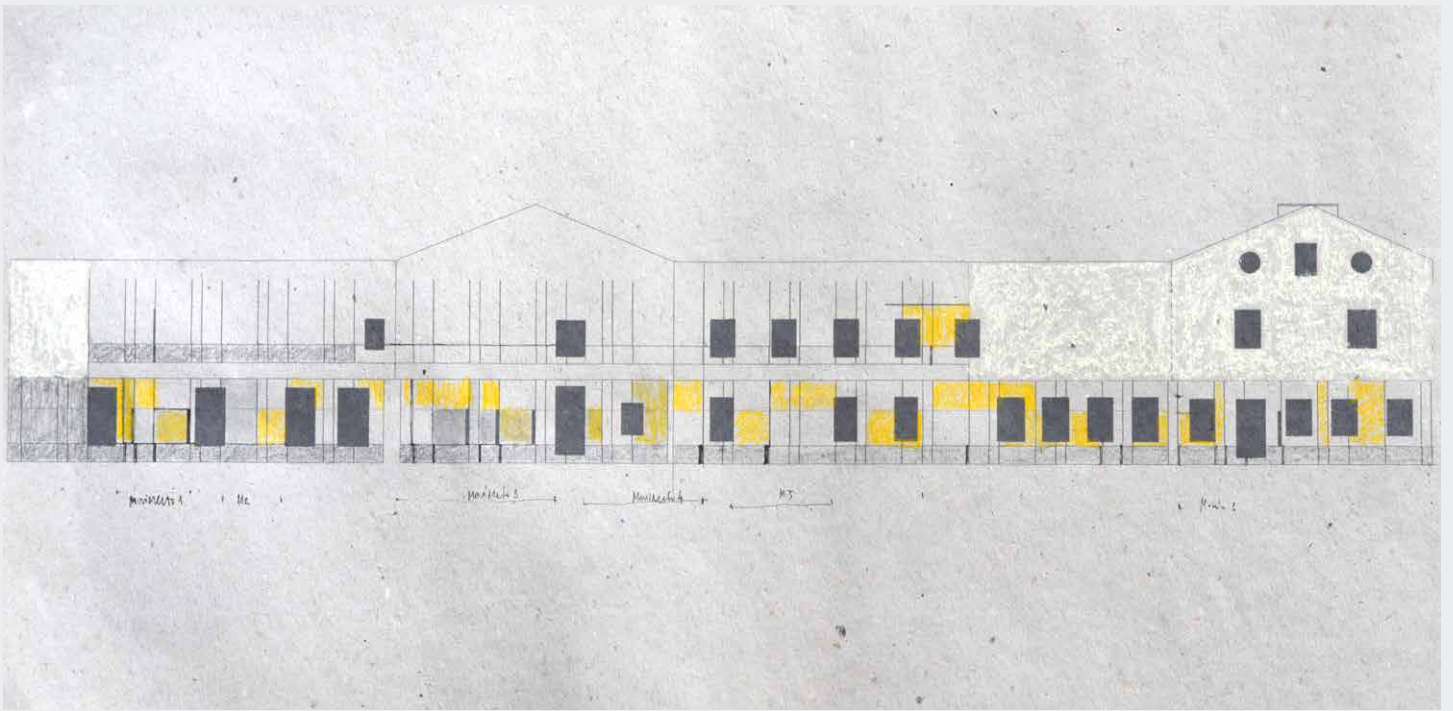


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# Heritage House: A New Museum to Celebrate the Legacy and Future of Cork



Linking the history of the Amorim family with that of cork, the Heritage House bears witness to a precious legacy, that must be preserved. This exploration into the Amorim universe also invites us to learn about and value cork as a unique natural and cultural material, in an immersive and authentic experience.

All the photographs in this article were taken by © José Campos

“This is where it all began,” is the thought that comes to mind as you walk through the garden gate of the Casa do Fundador (Founder’s House). Evident care has been taken with the building, which retains its elegance and, despite its age, continues to be well preserved, as if people still lived there. And indeed it continues to be inhabited. Lunches at the Casa do Fundador - held prior to work meetings in which transformative ideas are born - are exciting moments brimming with stories and tradition, in the home and point of origin of a daring generation. This connection to the family’s origins is reflected inside, through a mixture of heritage and innovation, looking to the future of cork. This originality is also reflected in the building on the edge of the garden - a former warehouse. When you enter this second building, through a subtle, almost silent door, you guess what awaits you once you step inside. But as soon as you enter the old warehouse - a rural building which previously served as a hayloft, warehouse and manufacturing unit - you are instantly hit by the characteristic aroma of cork and impacted by the beauty and humble grandeur of a space that has been completely reconfigured - to incorporate objects, revisit times and places, welcome people and, above all, tell a story. But what story? First and foremost, the story of the Amorim family, but also, inseparably, the story of a unique natural resource – cork – which it is important to learn about, value and preserve; the story of the associated culture and industry that takes it further, expanding its incredible possibilities; and the story and future of the unique cork forest, which is synonymous with sustainability.







## A journey to the world of cork

Nuno Barroca, Corticeira Amorim's Deputy Chair, was responsible for coordinating the renovation project for Heritage House, the museum that has reopened its doors after almost one year of design and two years of construction. For this project, he joined forces with the designers Pedro Caride (Por Vocação) and Mariana Serra, and the architects Hugo Dourado and Ana Batista (colectivoMEL), who have brought creativity, innovation, talent and passion to the project, interpreting the challenge, working side by side with Corticeira Amorim. While retaining its strong identity, revealing the precious layers of its history, the space is entirely new, has been completely transformed, and transports us on an appealing and emotional journey into the world of cork and its relationship with the various generations of the Amorim family.

## A living museum

In the beginning, it was a house. The house of the founder, who set up a small cork stopper factory in 1870, which led to a great adventure. The family home ceased to be used in the 1980s. Américo Amorim thought that it would make a good "visiting room" for the Amorim group, then in the midst of international expansion. He spoke to Eduardo Correia, the group's communications manager, to get the project underway. He wanted to build a museum in the warehouse behind the property, and the space opened in the 1990s. "That's how it all began. I also helped out back then," recalls Nuno Barroca. "Obviously the goal, moment and form reflected that specific moment in time. Several years later, we decided to chart a different course." Nuno Barroca adds: "I think Américo Amorim wanted to give that museum three dimensions: family, origin and longevity.

If there is one area where we excel, it's our family values. A 150-year history isn't to be forgotten, it should be honoured. That's what was at the root of the conception and reuse of this space. And with great success: it's now our visiting card. People come (to Corticeira Amorim) from throughout the north of Portugal, everyone visits."

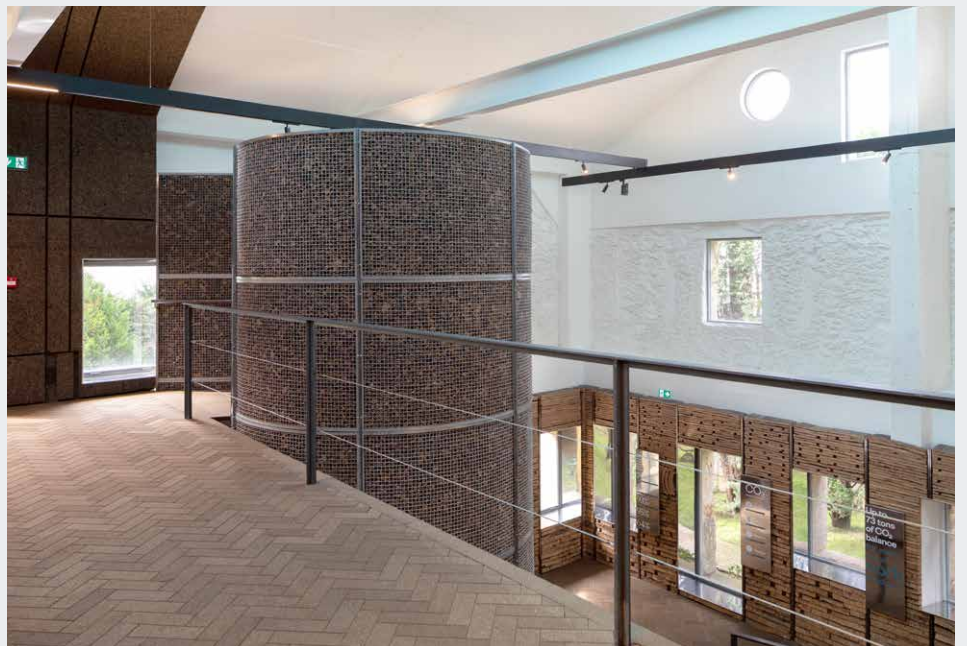


# Looking at the past, to build the future

“It was very important to see tradition, to tell part of the group’s history, and also to bring innovation into the space,” explains Nuno Barroca. “A space where you can breathe cork, and create a very pleasant space. I tried to maintain the space in its full originality, respectful of, and in harmony with, Nature, while ensuring that all the windows are in dialogue with the exterior. I think that the architect and designer interpreted this very well”. The design team explains how the house was transformed.

This involved a tremendous challenge: to take a “cluttered space, with false ceilings, plasterboard, hidden and covered windows, things that were perceived from the outside and not from the inside” and empty it and then reveal it in its full splendour. “We whittled the space down, and let the space tell its own story,” summarises Pedro Caride. The designers opted for the “simple gesture of creating new openings” and allowing sunlight in and the space to breathe, in a kind of “spatial archaeology” capable of illuminating the history of the place and, at the same time, bringing it to the present day. “For a building that was originally very humble and unpretentious, we were able to bring a spatial nobility – derived from the ceiling height, windows and doors, the sunlight, the skylights - it almost feels like entering a church, because of the high windows.” explains Pedro Caride.

«For a building that was originally very humble and unpretentious, we managed to endow it with a spatial nobility»





# Space and matter

In a world where materials merge and transform, cork is omnipresent. The project highlights and celebrates cork's sensory qualities, ranging from its earthy, comforting aroma, to its absorbent acoustics, encompassing a rich diversity of textures, vivid colours and comforting thermal characteristics. Cork can be found literally everywhere in Heritage House - in its pure state or in a more sophisticated form. Even for those who think they already know everything about cork, or think they've seen everything that can be done with cork, there will always be an element of surprise, amazement and wonder at the extremely creative manner in which the team of designers has approached the material. Pedro Caride and Hugo Dourado explain that the idea was to enable the architecture and interior design to work together to create a space that presents

the "face of Amorim". This involved combining two core materials - cork and metal: "Few clients in the world can have this language, which is so distinctive and their own. As the world leader, Amorim knows more about cork than anyone else in the world. Then there's the question of metal, because in its 150-year industrial history, metal has been linked to the industry from the very outset and continues today - from pallets, to transport, machines, saws, all the machinery. At the start of the project this relationship between cork and metal offered an iconic image - the material is born as the axe enters the cork bark. Thenceforth, this union of cork and metal continues until the end of the production process." Nuno Barroca explains that one of the project's most important elements is the incorporation of technology in construction of the space, through Grōwancork - a project born at Amorim Cork Ventures - which developed the

panels that display the project's features, displays and all its structural elements. Walking through a space where cork is omnipresent, the eye lingers on a few focal points, such as the staircase that provides access to the upper floor (a mezzanine entirely covered in expanded cork, which functions as a multipurpose room), a kind of cork "silo", where a metal grid is completely lined with cork waste, the material in its most primitive natural state, and cork granules on the inside. Or the flooring, specially developed for the project, which consists of a series of cork "clubs", placed in a herringbone pattern, inspired by wooden "clubs", using wooden planks to create an exquisite visual effect, accompanied by the unique sensation of walking on cork.







## From the family to the forest: a history of cork

“The historical record was very important. We wanted to span all four generations, and so the first moment was the family history,” explains Nuno Barroca, referring to the way in which the content of the exhibition was reorganised. This is the natural starting point, the beginning of an exhibition journey with a very clear and intuitive narrative structure, that visitors can explore in their own way and develop at their own pace. In addition to the static content, placed in panels that guide visitors along this journey, an LED wall, in the centre of Heritage House, presents complementary narratives, which intersect with the “backdrop” and allow for an even more personalised experience, tailored to each visitor. The content of the current exhibition is based on Corticeira Amorim’s collection and archives. The designers conducted intense research and curatorial work, in collaboration with Mariana Serra. Around 60% of the objects that were shown in the original museum were kept, but new materials and objects that were not previously on display were also brought in, which the team found by delving into the Amorim collection.

These include photographs, magazines, minute books, a “garlopa” (kind of manual lathe) and other traditional cork stopper manufacturing machinery, as well as objects as simple as a container from the factory’s canteen.

As we proceed into the cork forest, we see several examples of axes, instruments for measuring the calibre of the cork and for marking the tree after cork has been harvested. In addition, the exhibition includes elements that reflect the evolution of Corticeira Amorim since the 1990s, which were not included in the previous museum. After introducing the first two generations of the Amorim family, the narrative progresses through the 20th and 21st centuries, giving an account of the company’s transformation over recent decades, underpinned by material elements that concretise the story. Emphasis is naturally placed on the figure of Américo Amorim, the company’s great driving force, while shedding light on various decisive moments that have made Corticeira Amorim what it is today. From the history of the family, to the history of cork, the following sections of the museum highlight how cork has been used for millennia, from the Roman era onwards, and also how cork harvesting techniques have evolved over time. Next, we delve into the more industrial side of the history of cork, with a look at how cork stoppers are manufactured, from the 19th century to

the most advanced modern technologies, to understand how stoppers are made and discover an incredible portfolio of diversity, quality and performance. This focus on the magical cylinder - the modest yet great cork stopper - is complemented by the extremely valuable collection of historic stoppers, recently donated by François Audouze, that is meticulously organised in an installation, that is as simple as it is beautiful. The collection illustrates the symbiotic relationship between cork and wine and the passion that it arouses. And because the universe of cork extends far beyond the cork stopper, the next section presents a careful and surprising selection of the diversity of cork’s applications, highlighting its role in architecture, design and the arts, as well as the combination of this 100% natural, recyclable and renewable material with the most advanced technologies to invent pioneering solutions in areas as diverse as sports, the aerospace industry and the transport sector, among others. At the end, we return to the origins - the cork oak forest - to look towards the future. The forest - and, in this case, the pioneering example of the Herdade de Rio Frio estate, the centrepiece of Corticeira Amorim’s ambitious Forestry Intervention Project - and the path to sustainability, supported by unequivocal data, highlight the value of a unique material and ecosystem, and its role in the world that we all dream of building.





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# François Audouze: Guardian of Memories

Each wine conveys a message, but you have to be sufficiently open-minded and humble to hear it. François Audouze has been collecting old wines for over 50 years, made by the finest wineries. As well as around 40,000 bottles of some of the world's most incredible nectars, he guards the memory of these wines by storing their cork stoppers. He recently donated part of his cork stopper collection to Corticeira Amorim, which is now on display at Heritage House.

**You're passionate about old wines. Why did you start to collect them?**

When I began working I didn't know anything about wine, but when I was very young I bought a house and it had a wine cellar. If you have a cellar, you think about filling it with wine. I was completely ignorant about this, so I went to a wine shop, a very important one, the Nicolas wine cellar, and bought some wine. I didn't know anything about wine, so I would taste it, and if I liked it, I would buy it. If I tasted it and it was bad, I wouldn't buy it. Through this trial and error process, I started buying wine to fill my cellar.

**When did you suddenly realise that this was going to be your life?**

One day someone told me to go to another wine shop, where there were blind tastings every Friday. I went to that tasting and at one point I almost fell off my chair because the flavour was so incredible that I was completely astonished. It was a 1923 Sauternes and I realised that the truth is in old wines, that nothing can come close to the complexity of old wines. So I began a journey into the world of old wine.



© José Campos

**You've just said that the truth is in old wines. What do you look for when you receive an old wine?**

I look for flavours. It can come from a very cheap wine or very expensive wine. The question isn't whether it's expensive or cheap, but whether it has a flavour that I really enjoy. When you're in this world, you have to be open-minded and completely humble. I have dinners with people who have never drunk any wine from the 1920s. So I tell them - this is very important for me - if you know anything about wine, forget everything you know. If you think you know nothing about wine, forget that you know nothing. That's why I say: be humble, never judge a wine, try to understand it. I emphasise the importance of the word "try". Because if you try it, it means that you are humble, it means that you will always understand a wine if you are humble. If you have preconceived ideas, you will never understand a wine. That's why, in every experience, I have an open mind and try to understand the unique message of the wine. With old wines we have a complexity, a wide range of flavours, which always makes the experience very interesting.

I'm never nervous about whether the wine will be any good. I may say to a friend: let's open a wine from 1935. They usually reply: is it still good? That's what everyone says! But that's not the problem. It's about entering the world of this wine. If you enter, you'll understand the wine.

**Does that mean that even if it's not "drinkable", it doesn't matter? The important thing is the experience?**

You know, when you're in front of a wine, imagine that the bouquet isn't good, you might say "blargh" and then abandon it. But I won't. I'm going to try to understand the message of this wine, because it has something to tell me. Of course, if it's awful, you will say it's awful. But there are so many occasions when people judge before drinking, instead of tasting the wine! In my opinion, more than half of the wines that have been thrown away are great wines. People judged the wine too quickly and didn't understand the wine's message. I must add that my method of opening a wine can work miracles. Wines that people reject are possibly very good wines.

I trust old wines. I'm never afraid when I open an old wine, because I believe in it. Regarding the relationship with cork, I prefer original cork stoppers to recorked bottles. Because an original cork stopper has kept the air, the initial air. When you put in a new cork, you also put in new air and that changes the flavour. All my experiences with recorked bottles show that the flavour is not the same as bottles that have the original cork stopper. The cork plays the role of keeping the wine in its best shape. I open a bottle very slowly so that the air expands gently - if I remove the stopper too quickly, the air won't be happy. You should never pour a glass, to check whether it's good. Don't check, let the slow oxygenation do the work by itself. If you let the bottle stand, the contact with the air will be slow, and the wine will be perfect. And don't decant the wine, because decanting is fast oxygenation, it's too fast!



**You've tasted so many incredible, even legendary old wines. Are there one or two wines that stand out in your memory?**

I have great memories! Usually, when there is something impressive, it's almost a physical shock. Let me explain: one day, in the cellar of Maison Bouchard, I was invited to drink an 1865 Montrachet. When I tasted it - there were several people with me - it was as if nothing existed around me. I was in a bubble, alone, time suddenly disappeared, the world disappeared, I was alone with the expression of this wine. It was a physical shock. Incredible. I didn't believe that an 1865 Montrachet - a white wine - could be any good, but I was absolutely amazed at its perfection. It's a wine that, when you drink it, you can't imagine it could be any better and nothing better could have been made. And I've known 30 or 40 perfect wines in my life. It's something you recognise immediately. Imagine you go to Rome, to the Sistine Chapel. When you enter, you are awestruck by the beauty and say: "Wow, it's impossible to make anything better". It's the same thing with wine. When it's perfect, you immediately realise that it's perfect. I've had the opportunity to drink wines like that.

**Not only have you collected and drunk so many wines, but every time you open a wine, you keep the cork stopper. What is the significance of this little cylinder?**

When I started keeping the bottles, I saw the beauty of the bottle, the capsule and the cork. So I kept them. For me, it was about respect for the wine. If I respect the wine, I respect the bottle, and also respect the cork. Because the cork is very important. I don't think anyone in the world today has opened as many old bottles of wine as I have. I have opened all the bottles that I've drunk. In the cork stopper collection I donated, there are only the good ones, I kept the bad ones, (laughs) But I kept them because they represent memories. They're very important. My whole life has been about respecting wine, respecting everything that surrounds wine.

**You donated part of your cork collection to Corticeira Amorim. What led you to take this decision? Are you satisfied with the way that the collection is integrated in the museum?**

I thought it would be good to donate the collection to the world's largest producer of cork stoppers, because it makes sense

for them to keep the stoppers. It makes sense to preserve the memory of old corks. I believe that in everything I've drunk, the quality of the wine depends on the quality of the cork, so it makes sense for them to go back to Amorim. I'm happy that my collection is in Amorim's hands. I was fortunate to meet António (Rios de Amorim), who is a very positive person and who runs this company with a very positive spirit. To have seen all the people interested in my collection makes me very happy, because I think it will be preserved forever. I have wines that are made to be kept forever and knowing that the corks will also be preserved is my greatest pleasure.

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# Navicork: Sailing with cork, towards a sustainable maritime future



Combining innovation, performance and design, Amorim Cork Composites' new brand of sustainable solutions for marine decking – Navicork – stems from an innate curiosity and creative impulse to take cork and the maritime industry to new heights. Developed to create a positive impact, capable of shaking up the waters of the maritime industry, and contribute to decarbonisation of maritime and fluvial mobility, Navicork by Amorim aims to transform the sector by developing high-performance, cork-based decking solutions for different types of boats. Challenging conventions, Navicork has launched the most sustainable and high-performance decking solutions, designed to respond to the most pressing environmental challenges, particu-

larly in terms of protecting ecosystems, regulating the climate and fostering efficient use of resources. Using cork – a 100% natural, reusable and recyclable raw material – Navicork opens up new horizons and possibilities hitherto never imagined for the maritime sector. With unique versatility that permits application in different types and designs of boats, Navicork's sustainable decking solutions, developed from cork composites, take advantage of cork's unique technical characteristics (such as lightness, durability and thermal and acoustic insulation) and demonstrate its added value for an industry that needs to transform itself in order to meet current environmental challenges, without sacrificing performance.

## From the forest to the sea

Because they are made from cork – a natural material that grows in the cork forest – Navicork solutions are inherently sustainable, and are also 2-to-5 times lighter than conventional decks, with a unique natural texture that guarantees grip, stability and safety on board, offering excellent thermal and acoustic insulation that reduces energy consumption and contributes to passenger comfort. As well as being wonderful to walk on, the material's cellular structure absorbs footstep noise over the entire surface. For João Pedro Azevedo, CEO of Amorim Cork Composites, that developed the innovative composite used in Navicork solutions, this marks a turning point: "In view of the challenges currently facing the maritime industry, it is increasingly urgent to reassess the sector's business model and look for new, more sustainable solutions and materials. Navicork was born precisely with the mission of challenging the industry's underlying paradigms and presenting cork as the future for maritime decks. In addition to being sustainable, cork offers a number of technical characteristics that are ideal for meeting this market's performance needs and demands. Our production capacity, supported by state-of-the-art technology, combined with a spirit of innovation, that is unique in the world when it comes to developing new solutions using cork composites, makes us confident of the impact that Navicork can have on the maritime industry."



# Wicanders Wise, a 100% PVC-free portfolio

Even greener and even more innovative. That is how Amorim Cork Flooring now presents itself, with a 100% PVC-free portfolio, under the new Wicanders Wise brand. The initial goal was to make all Amorim Cork Flooring products even greener, i.e. 100% PVC-free by 2025. This ambitious target was achieved one year earlier, and became a reality in January 2024. Through this revolution, Amorim Cork Flooring will now produce totally synthetic polymer-free solutions in all its ranges, via the new Wicanders Wise brand, which represents, as the name suggests, a fusion between the comfort of Wicanders and the sustainability of Amorim Wise, in a single range. This important step in Amorim Cork Flooring's history is a clear sign sustainability and decarbonisation, in the context of the climate crisis, constitute an absolute priority for the company: "Carbon emissions in the construction industry account for around 40% of global emissions," says Fernando Melo, CEO of Amorim Cork Flooring. "In light of this brutal fact, three years ago we set ourselves the target of eliminating the use of PVC in all our products by 2025. Thanks to the efforts and commitment of the entire company, it will be possible to achieve this goal in January 2024,.

## At the forefront of digital printing

Allying innovation and sustainability, the launch of Wicanders Wise undoubtedly constitutes a historic milestone for Amorim Cork Flooring, which has been developing cork-based flooring solutions since the 1970s. The company's origin derives from the concept of the Circular Economy, based on using all by-products from the cork transformation process. To implement its new strategy, the company has progressively replaced all product ranges that still used PVC, with new products based on digital printing technology. Around €10 million have

been invested in the acquisition of a new digital printing line which, in addition to the realism of the printed image (directly on cork), replicates the texture of the different visuals, whether wood or stone, without using PVC. Fernando Melo summarises the motivation behind this investment: "we feel it is our duty to provide our customers with more than just a PVC-free offer. We provide a natural cork-based product, which has no fossil components and offers the same resistance as synthetic products." With a network of retailers and distributors in more than 60 countries, Amorim Cork Flooring is reaffirming its position as a leader of innovation and sustainability in the world of flooring.



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# Knowledge, responsibility and sustainability: expanding, sharing and contagion

*Cristina Rios de Amorim*

Through the work of Corticeira Amorim, cork has progressively gained a central place and leading role in design, architecture and sustainability initiatives worldwide



@ Iwan Baan

Corticeira Amorim has unparalleled knowledge of how cork can empower the transition to a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy, ensuring more responsible and safe consumption. The company has developed a broad plan of initiatives that make cork available to society in its most diverse forms, based on the company's technical expertise and know-how, thereby encouraging further knowledge, discovery and use. In 2010, Corticeira Amorim launched the Materia collection, Cork by Amorim, curated by Experimentadesign, which since then has formed the basis for a unique creative action in the sector, presenting cork on the main international design stages as it had never been seen before. Materia is a collection of sustainable objects, that applies new techniques and trends to cork, signed by national and international creatives, from distinguished figures to emerging designers from the world of design. We have seen





the growing involvement of a remarkable community of creative talents, who have made it possible to conquer new territories for cork. In the context of the Materia collection we receive hundreds of design, architecture and creativity projects, that often link cork and Amorim to important educational, social, environmental, cultural or artistic initiatives. Through the work of Corticeira Amorim, cork has progressively gained a place and a leading role in initiatives setting the design, architecture and sustainability agenda worldwide, such as the Serpentine Summer Pavilions, the V&A, the Tate Modern, the London Design Festival, Milan Design Week, the Venice Biennale and ARCO Madrid. This strategic action plan also focuses on raising awareness of cork among the world's design community - of today and of the future - by organising and taking part in various initiatives, in partnership with institutions such as the Domaine de Boisbuchet, the Royal College of Art, the Karlsruhe Institute (Germany), the Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti di Milano, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Parsons School of Design and the Pratt Institute, encompassing initiatives, workshops and even multi-year programmes on design, architecture and technology applied to cork. As a result, many hundreds of students around the world come into contact with cork during their education, receiving knowledge and a real motivation for cork and sustainability. In this issue, we invite you to learn more about three current initiatives: Spirit of Place (London), Generation Proxima (New York) and Not Post-Modernism. The cork installation, Spirit of Place,

conceived by the designer Simone Brewster for the London Design Festival 2023, is inspired by Portuguese cork oak trees and cork forests, placing a representation of Portuguese natural heritage in the centre of London, emphasising its characteristics and added value. Generation Proxima: Emerging Environmental Practices in Portuguese Architecture, the exhibition held at the Center for Architecture, in New York, highlights the approach and strategies of seven Portuguese studios whose practice is environmentally orientated, in the context of the climate

emergency. Cork plays a central role in this exhibition, from the construction of models to the design elements that line parts of the gallery walls. It thereby stands out as a material that has great visual charisma and excellence in terms of its performance and sustainability. The Serralves exhibition, "Not Post-Modernism. Dan Graham and 20th Century Architecture", conceived by the late artist, highlights eight architects whose work profoundly influenced him. Atelier Bow-Wow translated the exhibition into a curatorial space, by promoting a creative dialogue and dynamic interaction between the different ideas and forms. At the heart of this exhibition we encounter the transformative power of cork, a material that transcends a mere function to become an integral element of design and sustainability.

We complement our actions with a strong editorial plan, which since 1983 has included the uninterrupted quarterly publication, Amorim News; various publications on cork aimed at different target audiences, including children and young people in terms of environmental education; constantly renewed content on [www.amorim.com](http://www.amorim.com); various in-house publications, such as the books, Metamorphosis, Amorim: The Future is Our Present, The Cork Book and 1870 AMORIM 2020.



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# “Spirit of Place”: Simone Brewster Reveals the Splendour of Cork in the London Design Festival

Combining art and sustainability, cork has been presented once again at the London Design Festival, with the large-scale installation “Spirit of Place”, created by artist Simone Brewster, a project that Amorim Cork Composites supplied the materials for and implemented.

This wasn't the first time that cork featured in the world's leading design event - the London Design Festival. On this occasion the material shone in its full splendour at the hands of the distinguished artist, Simone Brewster, in close collaboration with Amorim Cork Composites. Occupying a public square in the centre of London, “Spirit of Place” took cork's potential one step further, playing with shapes, textures and dimensions in order to challenge the local community and interact creatively with the space. The installation consisted of five different cork columns, developed in collaboration with Amorim Cork Composites. The proposal was directly inspired by cork oak forests, referring to the verticality of the cork trees and their integration into a wider context, and also to the specificity of each tree, as a unique and unrepeatable living being. Amorim Cork Composites developed different cork composites and colours for this project, which were integrated into each column, thereby giving shape to the designer's vision, while highlighting

cork's diversity and versatility. Unusually for a British artist with Caribbean roots, she has a long-standing connection with cork: “My parents' kitchen had a cork floor. So cork was part of our kitchen,” she recalls. “It's strange, because cork has always been there, ever since I was a little girl. We didn't question it, it was always there. One day I looked at it and asked: what is this? Why does it have this kind of pattern? My father replied: ‘That's what it's like, it's cork.’”

The renowned British designer and artist is famous for her large-scale sculptural furniture, and for creating objets d'art, jewellery and “intimate architectures”. Initially, she planned to design 20 different stools for an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Her vision was transformed by her visit to the cork oak forest (“montado”). Simone Brewster was around eight months pregnant when the project began to be implemented, which forced her to postpone her trip to Portugal. “I had an idea for this project. The Amorim team was always telling me to visit and learn about cork. But I was

seven or eight months pregnant. So we cancelled. But we finally came over when my son was 3 months old. My husband is a “tree surgeon”, and when he visited the cork oak forest he said: this is my dream job! He asked more questions than I did,” she recalls. “But essentially, this visit made me realise that I needed to rethink everything. I decided to rethink my project, change its focus and make a project about this experience, about what we learned there. It's not every day that you have the opportunity to work with a material that is carbon negative, or can work with a company that doesn't fell trees, but instead actively plants them. Each of these aspects could be a theme, giving rise to a project in its own right. That is without even entering this beautiful forest and mentioning how fantastic it was to be there. I realised I could design the stools for another occasion. We can do a project about this experience and this very special place.”





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## A “cork forest” in the middle of London.

In the project for the London Design Festival, Simone Brewster approaches cork with a completely new eye and, as usual in her work, in a very material way: by playing with scale, textures, shapes and colours, to occupy a public space in the city centre. She called it “Spirit of Place”, in an attempt to capture and convey the spirit of the cork oak forest (“montado”) while provoking an unexpected interaction between that space, the work of art and the visitors. “As the pieces were put into position, people were able to see their internal structure. The cork pieces had to be stacked on top of each other. The assembly team would pick up the huge cork blocks which resembled concrete, because of their texture. The passers-by couldn’t understand what was going on. They’d ask in amazement, ‘How did you do that?’ I felt that the project has different levels. I wanted people to ask

questions, touch and basically interact with the material. Once people began interacting with the material and asking questions, I knew the project was a success. ‘Spirit of Place’ derives from the ancient idea that each place has a certain spirit, that endows it with a personality and is reflected in our sensations while there. This is what I wanted to convey - because it was very beautiful to be in the cork forest. I used its spectrum of colours as the reference point for the totem poles, but which was even more vibrant. I wanted to create something that would provoke that sensation of enchantment. That’s what I tried to bring to London.”

### All the layers

The installation can be seen as a set of totem poles, with an almost sacred narrative, like ceremonial vessels. Ultimately, it can be anything you want it to be. It has an obvious relationship with architecture. The artist explains that: “The London Design Festival was

looking for a location for the project. There were several possibilities. At first, I wanted to design the installation like a pavilion, more influenced by architecture. But to achieve this I needed to know the exact place where it was going to be installed. So I thought ‘what architectural languages can I use?’ I began investigating the language of columns. I found it interesting that we inherently have this language. We know what a column is. It doesn’t need to be attached to a building for us to know it’s a column. Columns were initially designed and made out of trees. In fact, the earliest columns were built around a tree, and then clad with stone. In this project we have a metal structure in the centre and cork on the outside. For me, there is always the question of the feminine, and architecture is very masculine. I wanted it to be closer to traditional architecture, like a column, but become more voluminous, more feminine.

# Rediscovering cork

For an artist who often makes her works with her own hands, it was a revelation to work with a material as sensorial as cork: “When I was studying at the Royal College of Art, I wanted to make a project with cork. I was designing stools, which I wanted to have volume but also be light. When I visited Corticeira Amorim and first touched the cork, my perspective changed. One of the issues with cork in the design world is that we think of a very specific aesthetic for cork, when in fact there are very different finishes. We realised that we can have a polished finish, or that we can combine cork with other materials, or have a dark appearance, and the surface can be very uniform. So we realised that we have a perception of the material, but in fact it has a much broader ‘bandwidth’”. In collaboration with Amorim Cork Composites, Simone Brewster was able to identify the type of cork that could offer the right “sensibility” for the project. She thought about the different finishes and even about working with natural cork colours, as she does in other projects. But then she realised that the context - the noisy streets of London - required a different response. She took inspiration from the tones of the cork forest - oranges, ochres and iron tones, soft green shades. Some of the colours are exactly the same as those that she found in the cork forest. She worked meticulously on the colours and their different combinations to achieve the right balance and harmony. On the last day of assembling the installation, she made the final adjustments. Using a paintbrush, she painted the blocks to make them look exactly how she wanted.

## Art and sustainability

After her experience with Amorim, Brewster’s view of cork will never be the same. She is already thinking about new projects and bringing other artists and designers together around this unique material: “I think that it’s important to realise the possibilities of this material, which not all designers are aware of. Especially in the field of architecture. I always know less about the material than Amorim’s team. But they were able to bring it to life, to



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translate my ideas, from my drawings, adjusting the blocks, the machines, and all the technical details.”

In the contemporary world, we must inevitably address the relationship between art and sustainability. The experience of the Spirit of Place has also been transformative in this regard. “The artist can have several roles,” she summarises. “You could say it’s about making something beautiful. But art isn’t necessarily about that. It can be about making you think, or having an idea in your head that you didn’t have before. The joy of art is the potential it has to open your mind. For example if art, in any form, gets us to think about the climate emergency – right now we’re literally lobsters boiling in a pot...

The role of art is to break the complacency that surrounds all this. The role of art is to make us aware, to remind and provoke us.



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# “GENERATION PROXIMA”: cork highlighted in the Center for Architecture in New York

“GENERATION PROXIMA” is the title of the exhibition organised by the Center for Architecture, in New York, dedicated to emerging Portuguese architecture, focusing on environmental practices. Throughout the exhibition, cork is affirmed as a reference material in the ongoing “environmental turn” in architecture, standing at the forefront of sustainable construction and innovation.

The proposal for the exhibition “Generation Proxima: Emerging Environmental Practices in Portuguese Architecture”, was to look at contemporary Portuguese architecture and offer an overview of emerging practises, focused in particular on the environment. The exhibition is promoted by the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), and is on display at the Center for Architecture, in New York, until March 2024. It is the first major architectural exhibition to be held in New York City since 2019, and highlights the international recognition and respect for Portuguese architecture. Seven Portuguese studios were chosen - Artéria, Coletivo Warehouse, Gorvell, Nuno Pimenta, Oficina de Arquitetura Pedrez, OODA

and Ponto Atelier - who, with different approaches and strategies, share an environmentally-orientated practice, in the context of the climate emergency.

## The relevance of cork

Cork, supplied by Corticeira Amorim, plays a prominent role in the exhibition. There is a continuous walkway running throughout the exhibition, as a kind of mobile, modular plinth. Cork is also used in the plinths, models and scale models, in fact throughout the entire exhibition space, which also includes underlays and cork agglomerate supplied

by Amorim Cork Composites and expanded cork agglomerate supplied by Amorim Cork Insulation. The choice of cork emphasised the material's inherent performance, versatility and sustainability – as a natural and renewable material at the forefront of the decarbonisation process - affirming the strength and relevance of this material, as well as its place in the field of sustainable construction and the ongoing transformation of architecture. Curated by Pedro Gadanho – the Portuguese architect, author, curator, former MoMA curator and Loeb Fellow at Harvard University - the starting point for the exhibition is his book “Climax Change! How Architecture Must Transform in the Age of Ecological Emergency”, which addresses

the impact of the climate emergency on contemporary architectural practices. This recent book follows the architect and curator's studies at Harvard University, where, as he explains, he tried to take "as many classes as possible in various areas, with scientists, with environmental economists, with energy experts", in order to gain up-to-date knowledge on the state of climate change, allowing him to reflect on how this knowledge applies to the field of architecture.

## Context and diversity

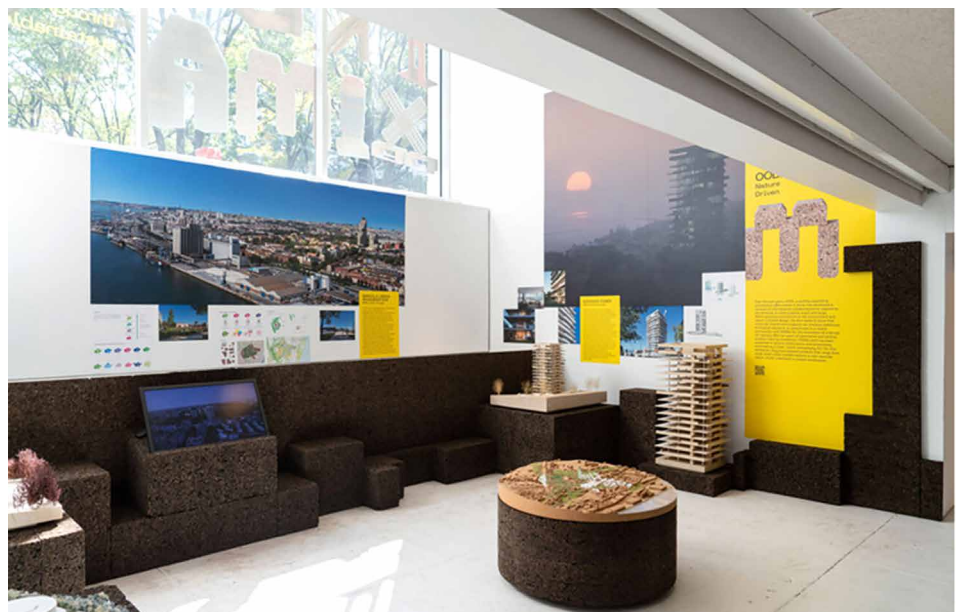
What implications, impact and responsibilities does the current scenario bring to the field of architecture and, above all, how are architects responding? "This is the so-called wicked problem - what scientists call a complex problem, that has no easy or obvious solution," explains Pedro Gadanho. "But all areas have to respond, and architecture as an integral part of the construction system, which contributes 38% of carbon emissions, obviously has a tremendous responsibility, including the way that architects incorporate possible mitigation solutions". When the opportunity arose to hold the exhibition in New York, the curator immediately knew what this involved: "For me this had to be the theme," adding: "the exhibition corresponds to a very activist commitment on my part about the way I view the practice of architecture."

After travelling the world to understand how this transformation is being built (wherein he stresses that "change begins on a small scale") Pedro Gadanho focused on Portuguese architecture, looking for studios that, regardless of their scale or "architectural logic", have some experience in this field. "More than a common language, I was primarily looking for diversity," he explains. In other words, to reveal the "panoply of possibilities that can serve as inspiration for others." That is why amongst the group of studios featured in the exhibition, some are more activist, others more corporate, including collectives and more authorial perspectives, etc. Pedro Gadanho was interested in understanding how architectural practices respond to the context, what concerns arise and what possibilities exist.

## Environmental turn

"Generation Proxima" highlights emerging practices in Portugal that offer contextual, artisanal and innovative forms of design as a response to the climate emergency, and whose work focuses on issues such as nature and biodiversity, and also on ideas of community, social participation and scarcity, that are very evident in traditional Portuguese architecture, in all its minimalist line and use of traditional building materials. Pedro Gadanho compares the necessary change in architectural practices in the current context to the emergence of the modernist movement in the early

20th century. "What is being defended now is that change must happen, once again, but directed towards more ecologically balanced practices. We face problems with resources, biodiversity and pollution. So all these areas must change." Cork will clearly have a key role to play in this transformation, which constitutes a real environmental shift, on the necessary path towards decarbonisation. "Cork is a Portuguese material, 100% natural, recyclable and renewable. We were interested in bringing cork's profound sensoriality and wealth of possibilities to the exhibition. This has been a great success. Even cork's aroma, its materiality linked to the earth," have marked the exhibition, concludes the curator.



© Sam Lahoz



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# Cork featured in the Serralves exhibition, “Not Post-Modernism. Dan Graham and 20th Century Architecture”

The organisation of the last exhibition that Dan Graham worked on before his recent death, pays tribute to a multifaceted artist, thinker and writer, and also offers an “essay on architecture” and an invitation to pose questions. Cork is subliminally integrated into the exhibition design, highlighting the potential for using sustainable materials in contemporary art and architecture, thus paving the way for the future.

“This is not an exhibition about Dan Graham’s sculpture or ‘work’. It’s about his intellectual methodology, about some of his ‘architectural heroes,’” explains Bartomeu Mari. “Not Post-Modernism. Dan Graham and 20th Century Architecture” is organised by the Serralves Foundation, curated by Dan Graham and Bartomeu Mari. It will be on display at Serralves until March 21. The exhibition highlights eight architects who profoundly influenced Dan Graham’s work and thinking - featuring Jan Duiker, Lina Bo Bardi,

Atelier Bow-Wow, Sverre Fehn, Itsuko Hasegawa, Kazuo Shinohara, Anne Tyng and Vilanova Artigas. The projects are transposed into the exhibition space by the Atelier Bow-Wow, promoting a creative dialogue and dynamic interaction of ideas and forms. Corticeira Amorim is an official sponsor of the exhibition and cork plays a central role in this dialogue of ideas and forms. Cork stands at the heart of the exhibition, highlighting its transformative power, performance and sustainability, and its contribution to

sustainable construction and contemporary architecture. Bartomeu Mari, who has worked closely with Graham since 1987, remarked in relation to the curatorial process: “Dan identified the participating architects and most of the projects. I completed the selection, identified the sources of the material (museums, archives,...) and made the final selection of documents. Atelier Bow-Wow (Momoyo Kaijima and Yoshiharu Tsukamoto) is responsible for the exhibition design - a decisive element of the show.”



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## From thought to matter

Dan Graham is the artist who best synthesised the conceptual, physical and cultural relationships between the practices of avant-garde art in the second half of the 20th century and architecture. He was one of the most influential artists of this period and I think that architecture and buildings were always a reference for him, but not in a formal or material manner,” summarises Bartomeu Martí. “Graham believed profoundly in a society that avoids segregation, that promotes equal rights for all and that provides free access to public culture. For Graham, art was part of this public culture, and so the city, striking a balance between private interests and the public good, was a model. Art was like the city, the world that he wanted to live in...He aspired to show the work of architects whom he greatly respected and who, in one way or another, had influenced his own work and thinking and, I repeat,

not just in a formal or material manner.” Martí explains that to achieve this goal, and to translate Graham’s vision into the exhibition space, the curators invited Atelier Bow-How, which has “extensive experience in architectural pedagogy”. It was this knowledge that the architects transposed into the exhibition, for example proposing placing the projects in pairs, as a “tool for navigating a vast ocean of ideas about architecture”.

The presence of cork in Serralves offers the chance to reflect on broader topics and urgent issues that extend beyond the museum walls. Bartomeu Martí reflects on use of the material, and its significance, in the exhibition and beyond: “Architecture is undoubtedly one of the most polluting human activities.

Contemporary architecture requires a ‘reset’ in which the use of natural materials will be central to the future of the planet and for human beings as a species. Cork is a material that is well worth discovering for many reasons. The intention is that the materials used

in the exhibition can be put back into use, in a clear example of the circular economy. Cork also offers an intermediate texture between straw and brick, the other two main materials used in the exhibition.”



# ASICS Run, in Tokyo, with Amorim Wise flooring

The renowned Japanese sports brand, ASICS Run, has installed Amorim Wise cork flooring in its Tokyo store.

The name ASICS derives from the famous Latin phrase “Anima Sana in Corpore Sano”, which means “A healthy mind in a healthy body.” Under the premise that every step is enhanced by the comfort and sustainability of this noble raw material, Amorim Wise flooring offers a superior experience, whether walking or running. These floors not only improve indoor air quality. Thanks to their natural thermal and acoustic properties, they also increase comfort within the-store, aligning perfectly with ASICS’ purpose. This alignment of values between Amorim Wise and ASICS emphasises well-being

and sustainability. The chosen visual, supplied by AD World, was Originals Shell from the Amorim Wise Cork Inspire range. This solution presents an ideal fusion between a healthy, sustainable lifestyle and the unique comfort of cork, in a flooring solution that has a negative carbon balance. In addition, by integrating sustainable flooring into its facilities, ASICS, with its legacy of more than 40 years on the international sports scene, has further strengthened its ambition, by demonstrating its ongoing commitment to innovation and environmental preservation.

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# Cork triumphs in the Golden Vines® Awards

Corticeira Amorim is proud to be a partner of the Golden Vines® Awards - for the second year running. This emblematic event celebrates the world of wine, and also the art of cork stoppers and the rich culture of winemaking.

The event's spectacular trophy is the result of Corticeira Amorim's commitment to excellence, combined with the innovation and creativity of French artist Jonathan Bréchnignac, and the mastery of British goldsmith Grand Macdonald. Under the curatorship and vision of Shantell Martin, the creative director of the international awards and the 2021 design mentor, the cork trophy has achieved an unrivalled level of dynamism, ranging from Gucci's elegant casing to the meticulous work of British goldsmiths. Cork has been elevated to a level of indisputable nobility, thanks to the talent of Bréchnignac, in a perfect fusion of frescoes that evoke primordial signs and prehistoric art. The trophy's engraving represents a fresco whose story is about sharing with simple forms and symbolism, depicting the prism of wine throughout history, shaded with colours alluding to the French flag, where the 2023 event was held and is the artist's homeland.

The Golden Vines® Awards is a non-profit awards ceremony organised by Liquid Icons - the research and content production company for the wine sector founded by Gerard Basset and Lewis Chester. The 2023 edition was held at the Paris Opera Garnier in October 2023. The event is the most important meeting of the year for world leaders, collectors and experts in the wine industry. It was attended by around a thousand wine professionals from

more than 130 countries, who chose the 2023 winners of the Golden Vines® Awards. The issue of sustainability is a key priority for the sector, and in 2022 the Sustainability award was created, sponsored by Gucci.



©Marc Piasecki – Getty Images



# Joaquim Amorim

1937-2023

“If you know the world and know how to adapt to it, you will be successful. I was fortunate enough to adapt to the world.”



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# AMORIM

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# Sustainable by nature