



*Video*

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***Floors of (H)openess: To Belong in the Present.***

**MADEIRA, Ana**

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## MADEIRA, A. M. (2024). *Floors of (H)openess: To Belong in the Present.*

*Floors of (H)openess* is an interdisciplinary approach combining performance, installation and video to explore the intersection between nature, human beings, and their surroundings. By using plants from introduced species as a metaphor for displacement and alienation, feelings that permeate everyday life and routine spaces, the intervention invites viewers to question their connection with the environment they inhabit and with the present moment.

The project was developed at the Penteada Campus of the University of Madeira and emerged from the personal experience of the artist, Ana Madeira, during her time as an exchange student. Throughout her mobility period, Ana identified a sense of misalignment and detachment, both within herself and between the students with whom she interacted. This perception led her to reflect on the absence of a sense of belonging among young adults in search of their own place in the world. Such observations resonate with the island's landscape itself, where a significant portion of the existing flora is non-native, revealing a context of constant adaptation and strangeness, supporting the choice of materials used.

Her interventions consisted of temporary inscriptions on the ground, rethinking notions of identity and coexistence. This practice was based on the collection and appropriation of non-endemic elements found outside of university, with which she wrote words in public spaces, raising social and environmental questions, and expanding reflections on belonging.

The research process began with an anonymous online questionnaire that invited a group of students to share their perceptions of the academic community and their emotional relation to a place they frequented almost daily. The feedback gathered was condensed into six words that synthesized shared ideas, emotions, and collective experiences.

Each word was then materialized as a unique, ephemeral, and isolated act: a solitary message on the ground of a common space, sometimes written in a foreign language, transforming the exterior into a momentaneous, open diary. Ana moved through the university, perceiving it as a site of passage and convergence of multiple lives as a unifying point.

Drawing inspiration from the paradoxical symbolism of the *Wall of Hope*, a traditional component of the Flower Festival in Funchal, Madeira, Ana reappropriates this duality in *Floors of (H)openess*, a title resulting from the fusion of the English words *hopefulness* and *openness*—two attitudes the project seeks to awaken in contemporary generations.

By reusing decomposing natural materials, the action restores symbolic life to usually discarded objects and aims to raise awareness of the transitory essence of all things, inviting viewers to open themselves to the “now” and to reaffirm the importance of connection—to the world and to the self.

Ana Madeira, August 2025