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## **TRANSVERSAL: CROSSING TERRITORIES AND INTERCOURSE INFLUENCES BETWEEN DENTAL MEDICINE AND FINE ARTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This work presents the results of the project «Transversal», one scientific and artistic event that aims to establish connections between dental medicine and fine arts.

Held in 2015, in a partnership between the Department of Dental Medicine and the Department of Painting, from the University of Porto, it brought together conferences, concerts and art exhibitions that aimed to discuss the interdisciplinary and the transversality of these two areas. It also aimed to explore in what way the cooperation between both areas could bring positive outcomes for the participants (i.e., teachers, researchers and students from both departments). This article presents the results of this project, and shows how transversality can be an effective tool to construct new and alternative perspectives of Art and Dental Medicine.

**Keywords:** transversality, dental medicine, painting, contamination.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the field of the Arts, transversality between areas is quite frequent, but this is not the case of dentistry. The main objective of the project 'Transversal' was to bridge the boundaries of the areas of dentistry and arts based on the idea that research and its practical applications are increasingly influenced by parallel universes, distant from those initially envisioned. Einstein said that his process of scientific discovery was closer to artistic creation than to classical scientific inquiry. In this sense, discovery in scientific fields was associated with processes of intuition, imagination and affection, rarely identified in areas such as dentistry or the sciences in general. So, what could an artist teach to a dentist, or vice versa? Could art cooperate with dental medicine? What results to expect?

In this context, the “Transversal” project was developed at the same time by the Department of Art and the Department of Dental Medicine of the University of Porto, and it aimed to draw bridges, synergies and tangencies between both areas, as well as to highlight the main differences between both fields, which are not always as obvious as one might at first recognize.

Dentistry needs Design for the development of more ergonomic or even aesthetic tools, equipment and prostheses, but from the artists' modes of action, little or nothing seems to be needed. However, the Design is directly correlated with the art practice, often assuming that the utility of the object will not be essential for its.. Aesthetics, on the other hand, does not seem to be confined to a territory of harmonization and equilibrium, like normally the utility

of objects needs. And in this aspect, the Arts' work as compared to the Designs' work aims to contribute with processes that are more speculative than functional, hoping to add value through, unrestrained and unconstrained models of thought.

## RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The results are qualitative rather than quantitative. The researchers of the Department of Fine Arts developed a greater knowledge of the research field in Dentistry, appropriating the themes and the concepts, and including it in their artistic practice using the same traditional technics, like oil or acrylic. Other researchers in Art have incorporated prosthetic elements of orthodontics into their personal projects, instead of using classical technics. Three research fellowships were also awarded to researchers from the Department of the Arts in order to continue the research initiated in the 'Transversal' project.

The results for the researchers and students of the Department of Dental Medicine were less obvious at first, and were less evident. However, it was noticed through a direct interview with 50 students and researchers that the processes of artistic creation can be included in the research in Dental Medicine. This may occur through the expansion of the perspective held about dentistry practice. The study developed by Miguel Pais Clemente, under the coordination of Professors Joaquim Gabriel and Afonso Pinhão Ferreira, with the application of Thermography to the study the symptomatology of orofacial pain, is an example of this expansion. In addition to the Transversal project, the Department of Dental Medicine has developed partnerships with other artistic areas, namely, with the Music Department of the Superior School of Music of the Arts and the Spectacle, in order to increase cross-sensitivity and expansion of research processes based on creative freedom.

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