

Mariana Mata Passos

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PROFILE

Cultural programmer and artistic director with fifteen years of experience at the intersection of contemporary sculpture, rural territory, and participatory practices. Director of *Pó de Vir a Ser*, a DGArtes-funded structure that has reconfigured Évora's former municipal slaughterhouse into a space for creation and research on Alentejo marble. Editorial coordinator of *Electra* magazine (Fundação EDP) and co-author of the first Cultural Prescription model implemented in Portugal, with extensive experience in projects bridging Art and Mental Health.

Born in Lisbon on 03/06/1981. Has lived and worked in Évora since 2010.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Editorial Coordinator — Electra Magazine, Fundação EDP

April 2026 – present

Management of the magazine's editorial process and liaison with national and international authors and contributors.

Artistic Direction and Programming — Associação Pó de Vir a Ser — Stone Sculpture Department — Évora Cultural Centre

August 2017 – present · Founding member and Board member (Treasurer) · RPAC member since 2022

Responsible for the cultural programming and artistic direction of the association, structured in biennial cycles centred on contemporary sculpture, Alentejo marble, and the relationship with matter. Based in a municipal facility — the former Évora Slaughterhouse (4,000 m²), granted under protocol by the Évora City Council — the structure has hosted approximately one hundred artists in residence since 2017. Conceives and coordinates residencies, critical research, mediation with diverse audiences — including people with experience of mental illness — and co-programming with national and international institutions. Author of all funding applications for the structure (DGArtes — Sustained Support, EEA Grants, RPAC) and responsible for partnership development and institutional network building. Ensures executive and budgetary management and team coordination.

Co-coordination of the Cultural Prescription Pilot Project — Alentejo Central Intermunicipal Community (CIMAC) — Transforma Programme

2022 – 2023 · Co-coordination with Patrícia Deus Claudino

Development of an experimental cultural prescription methodology for Alentejo Central, connecting the territory's 14 municipalities, health centres, and local cultural agents. Methodology recognised by DGArtes and the University of Porto as national best practice; co-authorship of the Cultural Prescription Manual, a reference for replicating the model.

Communications — Cendrev — Évora Dramatic Centre

2019 – 2020 · Collaboration on communications for performances and initiatives

Inventory of João Cutileiro's Estate — Casa Atelier João Cutileiro, Évora — Alentejo Regional Directorate for Culture

June 2016 – October 2018

Preliminary organisation and cataloguing of the estate of sculptor João Cutileiro.

Educational Service — Fundação Eugénio de Almeida, Évora

April 2016 – 2018

Teaching of Art History at the Senior University and guided-tour facilitator for the Educational Service of the Fundação Eugénio de Almeida Contemporary Art Centre.

PROJECTS, CURATORSHIP AND PROGRAMMING

Geology of Attention — Biennial Programme 2025–2026 — Pó de Vir a Ser

2025 – 2026 · Artistic direction

A programme exploring the artistic and cultural possibilities of geology as a study of attention, with stone as the primary matter and sculpture as a practice that crosses fields while shifting strategies, ways of making and thinking. Organised around four axes — creation, programming, mediation and research —, it includes creative residencies (FAHR 021.3, Sara Anjo), exhibitions (Eduardo Freitas / "Don't Pull the Trigger", University of Évora; "Autonomy of Stones", Pedro Fazenda and Rodrigo Pedreira), exchange programmes (Casa sem Telhado, with artists from Brazil and Portugal), and the Free Course in Poetry and Visual Arts with António Guerreiro.

Isto Não É Um Cubo (This Is Not a Cube) — Co-programming — Pó de Vir a Ser + Culturgest + Arquipélago – Centre for Contemporary Arts

December 2024 – March 2026 · Supported by: DGArtes / RPAC

A co-programming project across three territories (Évora, Lisbon and São Miguel), bringing together three cultural institutions, three artistic structures (OSSO, Space Transcribers, Teatro do Frio), and resident public collectives in each city. An ongoing programme of nine public sessions with ten guest specialists (Filipa Oliveira, Marta Mestre, Fernanda Fragateiro, Sofia Victorino, Denise Pollini, Raquel Pedro, Ricardo Vicente, Samuel Guimarães, Hugo Cruz and Rodrigo Malvar), culminating in a collaborative catalogue in 2026. Conceptual starting point: "Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone" by Claire Bishop.

The Participation of Stones — Biennial Programme 2023–2024 — Pó de Vir a Ser

2023 – 2024 · Co-creation (with Pedro Fazenda and Rodrigo Pedreira) · Premiered May 2024, co-produced with Culturgest

A piece for the stage and for unconventional spaces inviting handling and spontaneous interaction with stone art objects, reformulating the canonical experience of the viewer before the artwork. Presented at the Frei Manuel do Cenáculo National Museum, at Culturgest, and at O Espaço do Tempo, with consultancy and text by António Guerreiro.

Dandelions — Co-production Materiais Diversos + Pó de Vir a Ser + Culturgest

2021 – 2023 · Artistic direction (with Elisabete Paiva and Raquel Ribeiro dos Santos) · Funded by EEA Grants

A participatory arts project involving around 30 young people (aged 15–18) and 12 young artists from three territories (Sardoal, Évora, Lisbon) and Iceland, in partnership with the Academy of the Senses (Reykjavík) and OsloMet, with research support from FCSH-NOVA and the University of Évora. Funded by the EEA Grants (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway). Closing forum at Culturgest in January 2023.

Workshops of the Possible — Pó de Vir a Ser · artistic direction

2020 · Supported by: DGArtes, Évora Municipality, NERE, ASSIMAGRA

Publications

"Começar a Acabar" ("Starting to End"), catalogue essay for the project Isto Não É Um Cubo (Pó de Vir a Ser / Culturgest / Arquipélago), 2026 (forthcoming).

"Dentes de Leão (algumas certezas provisórias)" ("Dandelions — some provisional certainties"), opening essay (pp. 8–27), co-authored with Raquel Ribeiro dos Santos, in Dentes de Leão — Ativar a Participação nas Artes, vol. 1 (ed. by the authors), Materiais Diversos / Culturgest / Pó de Vir a Ser, 2023 (ISBN 978-989-35186-0-1).

Eduardo Freitas: em.prego, co-authored with Teresa Furtado and Vítor Gomes, La Junqueira Artists Residency, 2023 (ISBN 978-989-54715-6-0).

Manual de Prescrição Cultural do Alentejo Central (Alentejo Central Cultural Prescription Manual), co-authored with Patrícia Deus Claudino, CIMAC / Transforma Programme, 2022.

João Cutileiro — A pedra não espera: maquetas e escultura para o espaço urbano (João Cutileiro — Stone Does Not Wait: Maquettes and Sculpture for Urban Space), research and organisation, Alentejo Regional Directorate for Culture, 2018 (ISBN 978-989-98990-2-5).

PUBLIC TALKS

Moderator of round table at the 2nd RPAC Meeting "Collaborative Dynamics" — Portuguese Network of Contemporary Art, DGARTES / Santo Tirso City Council, 27 October 2025.

Speaker on the Cultural Prescription project — Directorate-General for the Arts (DGARTES), October 2023.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Art History — NOVA University Lisbon (FCSH)

2015 · Grade average of seventeen (17/20)

SKILLS

Excellent written Portuguese (pre- and post-1990 orthographic conventions) · Professional correspondence in Portuguese and English · Drafting of public funding applications · Partnership development and institutional network building · Executive and budgetary management, and team coordination.