

## BASED ON A TRUE STORY

If I'm being completely honest here, I'm reluctant to write this text. I find the task quite daunting: writing about a month's residency means writing about ten artists with extremely diverse approaches, interests, references, yet ten artists echoing each other, influencing one another, having tea, spilling the tea, throwing big ideas. We talked about giallo movies, eroticism and horror, crime and tenderness, about poetics of spaces, intimate relationships with objects, hazy dreams and concrete memories, about the falsely naive patterns of leisure culture, the creative power of household supplies, the architecture of Aldo Rossi, the backstage of a theater, about relics of days past, impermanence, human behavior, potential disasters and beauty in decay.

(If I am completely honest with you, writing a list is much easier than writing a text.) The reason I'm trying to be honest here, is mostly, that the artists themselves have shared their approaches with sincerity and transparency – from the collection of their materials to the construction of their tools, from patience to excitement, through dismay and breakthrough. I saw nylon stockings turning into brushes and accidents becoming rituals. Above all, I witnessed former strangers finding themselves here, in the middle of a pandemic, working, not knowing, sometimes finding, basically coexisting under the roof of a derelict industrial park lost in Barreiro. Also, I really don't want to be this umpteenth person to quote Foucault in an umpteenth contemporary art text, but admittedly, in this space, I finally fully grasp his concept of "heterotopias": "places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society — which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia. [...] Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality." A heterotopia can be a garden, an asylum, or even an American motel room where you would have your secret affair — any place superimposing meanings, temporalities and imaginaries, existing in time, but also outside of time. It can be a space where the inanimate has a voice and a heart, where vacuum cleaners become painters and painters themselves are window makers, where the floor ends up on a wall, where a coffin is a refuge, where phantoms appear on bed sheets and where a palette is a portal to one's mind. Sadly, the list has to stop at some point: in a residency context, an exhibition opening is also an ending. And if I'm being completely honest here, I get a sense of "saudade".