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Typewriter
MESSA M1
cleaning

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Research projects: Pure Print/i2ADS,
GroundLab/i2ADS

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Photos: Raahel Rüütel, Kärt Heinvere,
Graciela Machado

Acknowledgement: Tiago Cruz



This is a typewriter MESSA Model M1. Graciela Machado identified its presence among stones and materials in the busy corridor serving as a mosaic workshop. Later, she questioned its function in the area, and since it was not of great utility for the technologies in question, it was assigned to be incorporated into the printmaking studio for future use. First time it will be ever used after yeras of retirement, will be in Atelier Nomade.

Messa was a large Portuguese typewriter company that was located in Mem Martins, in the municipality of Sintra. The typewriters were sold to 60 countries. Founded in 1959, it was the factory with the most employees in Sintra.

The factory was closed in early 1985 due to a lack of progress and adaptation to market needs, such as electric typewriters and the appearance of the first personal computers with word processing. Overall, they produced medium-quality typewriters that were a significant part of Portuguese daily life.

This specific model is from 1976. The machine has a letter layout called HCESAR. The purpose of the layout was to place the most frequently used keys in the center of the layout. It was created in 1937 under the Estado Novo regime.

In the first stage, the machine was very dirty with dust and dirt that had piled up over many decades. Raahel Rüütel, with the help of Kärt Heinvere, disassembled and cleaned the typewriter using an air compressor, rugs, cotton sticks, and brushes. They got a new ink ribbon from fellow student Joana Pintor, so, in case the current ribbon runs out, it's easy to change.

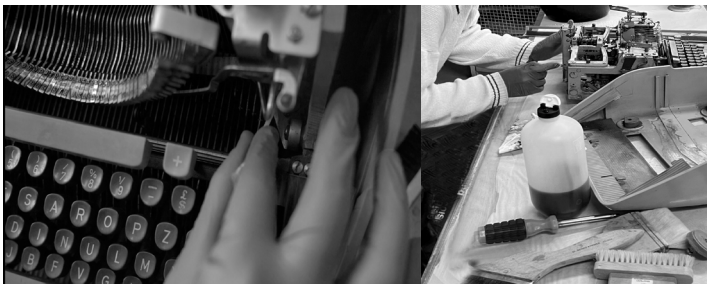


First step is to unmount the machine and disassemble all the plastic covers that are possible to remove. Other than hands we also needed screwdriver.

Next up the machine was carried to FBAUP wood and metal workshop, where with advice from Tiago Cruz we used air compressor to blow the dust out from places that would have been inaccessible otherwise. Eye and ear protection was mandatory.



After that we moved back to printmaking workshop where rest of the cleaning took place. For this we used cotton swabs and rags. Trying to clean from each little hole and gap.





After all the parts were separately cleaned, the challenge was to reassemble all the parts as they had been before. Then we did some last little polishments and the typewriter was ready to use. In the future, when the ink will run out, there is an extra one to use.



This typewriter will be used for Atelier Nomade at Fundação Instituto Marques da Silva.



REFERENCES

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"Just My Typewriter" Youtube channel

