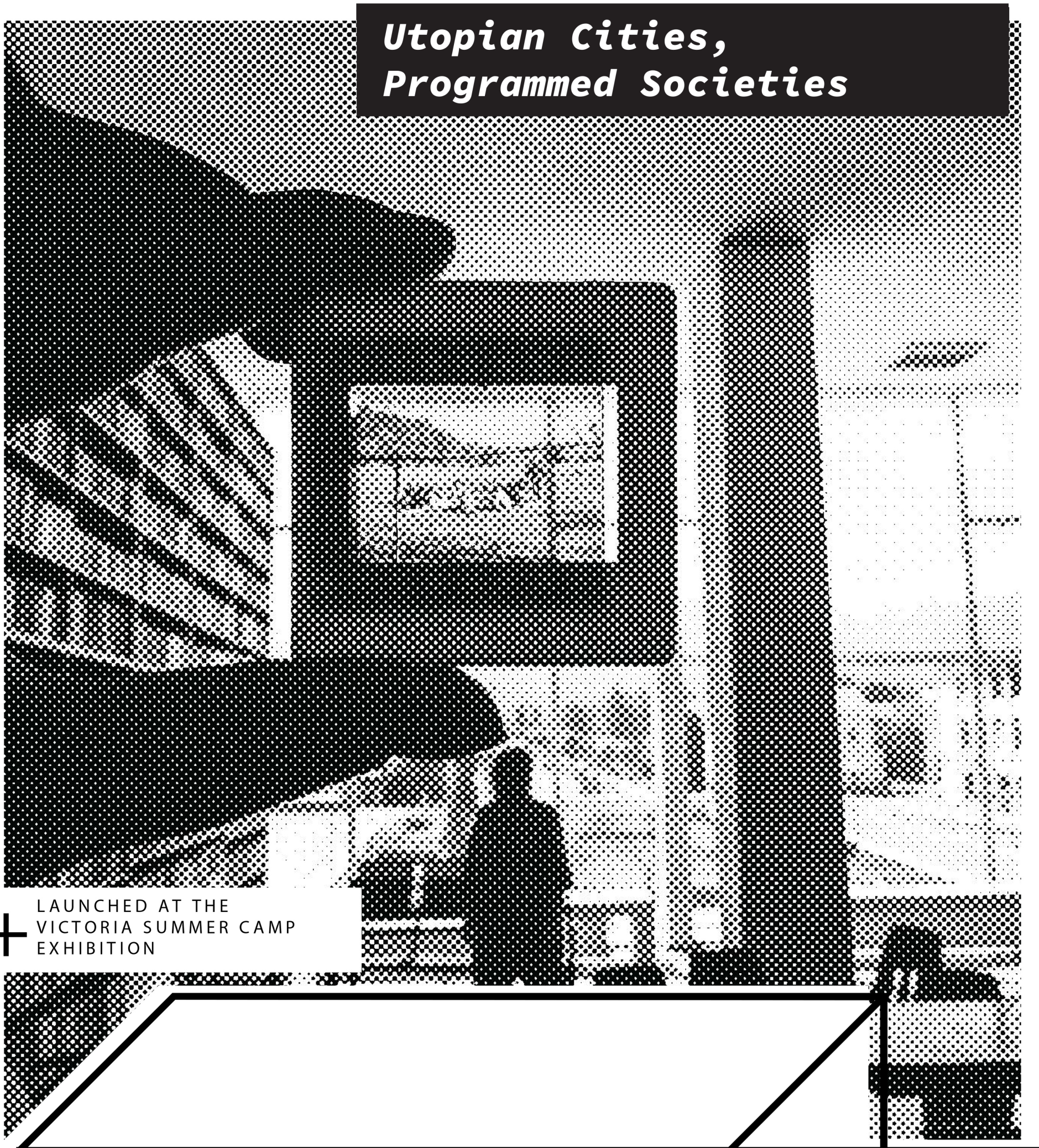
Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies



LAUNCHED AT THE
VICTORIA SUMMER CAMP
EXHIBITION

VICTORIA
SUMMER CAMP'S
JOURNAL

PRELIMINARIES

Tincuta Heinzel, Dana Diminescu, Lasse Scherffig

Design is common place today. It seems to be involved in most aspects of our lives: from the ‘drawing’ of an object / product (in the sense established by the modern, industrial design), to today’s mobilization of design as method to negotiate social interfaces and common places (co-design). Design is of cinema, imagining social situations and setting up interactions (as the scenarios have a key role in the development of interactive devices and in the development of services). Design is also of engineering, as the frontiers of science are moving from their descriptive roles towards more constructivist approaches. Last, but not least, design is also of politics, requesting (legitimate or not) the role of intermediary between different stakeholders. No doubts about it, design is a verb. Designing is to draw, to plan, to imagine, to project the future, to negotiate, to articulate, to bring change, to programme…

‘Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies’ is a two-year project that takes the traces of design and aims to investigate them. It is a project that considers both Eastern and Western European histories of science and technology in order to support critical interventions related to the mainstream technological discourses. Often neglected in science and technology studies (STS) research, the history and the concepts developed in the ex-socialist countries from Eastern Europe might prove of interest in the present globalised and digitised world. Aiming to build and to develop a new form of social organisation based on Marxist ideology, the socialist states developed scientific and technological tools to help them design their environment and to plan their economies. Incited by the debates related to the “new man” and the “new societies”, architects, designers, economists and technicians (or in other words, the technocrats), were invited to reflect and to bring to reality the new societal models. Architecture, urbanism and cybernetics soon become important tools of reflection and modelization of society.

‘Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies’ project aims to analyse the way we build our cities, the way we draw our living contexts, the way we imagine the technologies that support us in the building of our cities and the production of our environments. It is a project that questions the way we draw, the way we project and imagine new contexts, new environments, new technologies, new objects, our relationship to nature. It is also a project that reflects at the ways design has an influence on the way we live, should live, would like to live.

In this first year we took the town of Victoria as starting point for a reflection on utopian cities and their afterlife. We were interested to understand how certain utopian visions matured, how they were implemented, how they evolved, and finally where to take them.

Victoria is a recently founded town, historically established in 1949, at the end of the Second World War. In a way, it is a young town. Victoria was built from scratch in the Carpathian mountains, following the plans proposed by that time’s Soviet partners. The design of the town was selected from a catalogue. Victoria is from this point of view a ‘town-product’, one that should have answered the ideals of the socialism. It is one of four identical towns build on the same principles in the world (the others are in Georgia, India and Russia). It was supposed to be a model town, a town of an eternal on-going utopia and a town where the industry and of the roses flourish. Victoria was a town built on some pillar institutions: the city hall, the police, the school, the technical high-school, the house of culture, the post office and telephones (communication). It was a town with a well-developed infrastructure, in strong connection with that of the local combinate. And the combinate was the only industrious enterprise of the city, with old military strategic importance.

The people of Victoria were from the neighbourhood villages or brought here from all over regions of Romania to work in the combinate. Many of them were specialists, trained as chemists, physicists, and so on. None from the first generation of inhabitants were born there. But little by little, as the combinate developed and the town grew, a certain sense of living together developed. Today, in 2019, when the city celebrated its 70 years of existence, the inhabitants were recollecting their memories and stories.

But today, Victoria is also listed as a shrinking city, losing its inhabitants and in this way its vitality. The causes might be multiple: Eastern Europe’s failed socialism, the country’s new political and economic contexts, technical and industrial developments. The present is sensed as a moment of crisis and the inhabitants are asking themselves where to drive the destiny of the city in the future.

Our interventions during the summer of 2019 were looking precisely to collect the traces of the past, to catch the present’s reality and to incite the inhabitants to imagine the future. The lectures, the visits and the walks in the city were designed to bring the multifaceted aspects of Victoria to light and to place them in the larger context of today’s global realities.

By documenting, interpreting and artistically commenting the findings, the project aimed to create the premises for a critical address, to re-evaluate architecture, design and technologies premises and their forms of intervention in solving societal problems or sketching sustainable, suitable and ethical futures.

Next year, focus of the project will be on cybernetics and economy. By collecting all these different insights into the ways we design and we transform our world, the project aims to reflect to what changed in our economic models and what encourages cybernetic interventions in today’s liberal economies. It seeks to historically ground contemporary ideas of disruptive optimizations of economies and politics in the ideas of planned economies and cybernetic real-time-feedback, and it aims to think and develop alternative futures.

Utopie c’est nulle part

Dana Diminescu

1.

At first, Victoria was a military project with no name. The place, a Carpathian land (a mountain summit, the Gîrdoman) covered in forests down to the foot of the mountain, with abundant wild rivers, which descended towards a prairie with tall grass and dogberry and discharged into the Olt river. The villages were strewn along their banks, they were ”down” or “up”, they had meadows and forests and ponds up in the mountains. Beyond them, the forests were almost untraveled. The industry was nonexistent. The population worked the land and raised livestock. The landscape was alpine.

The project was a powder factory for live ammunition. The place was strategically chosen. It was located inside the military “safety area”. The site could be dissimulated by the dense forest, needed a lot of water and concealment. In winter and summer. It also needed manpower and, in order to shelter and enroot it, the war ministry needed to design a new settlement. The winds, groundwater and soil deposit were studied. The expropriations, slope of leakage of water, shock waves of the explosions and frost lines were calculated.

Works on the factory began in 1939. They were coordinated by a commission of Romanian military engineers, the technology was French and the manager was German. The workforce came from the nearby villages, but around 800 Russian and Serb war prisoners were also brought. They cleared the ground, made the first roads, built the railway and redirected the waters of seven valleys towards the water plant. Many of them laid down their lives. If Romania hadn’t been on the side of the defeated following World War Two, the city would have been raised west of the factory, towards the Ucea River. It would have been a mountain city, a resort that would have descended to the plateau where the solar mirror field spreads today.

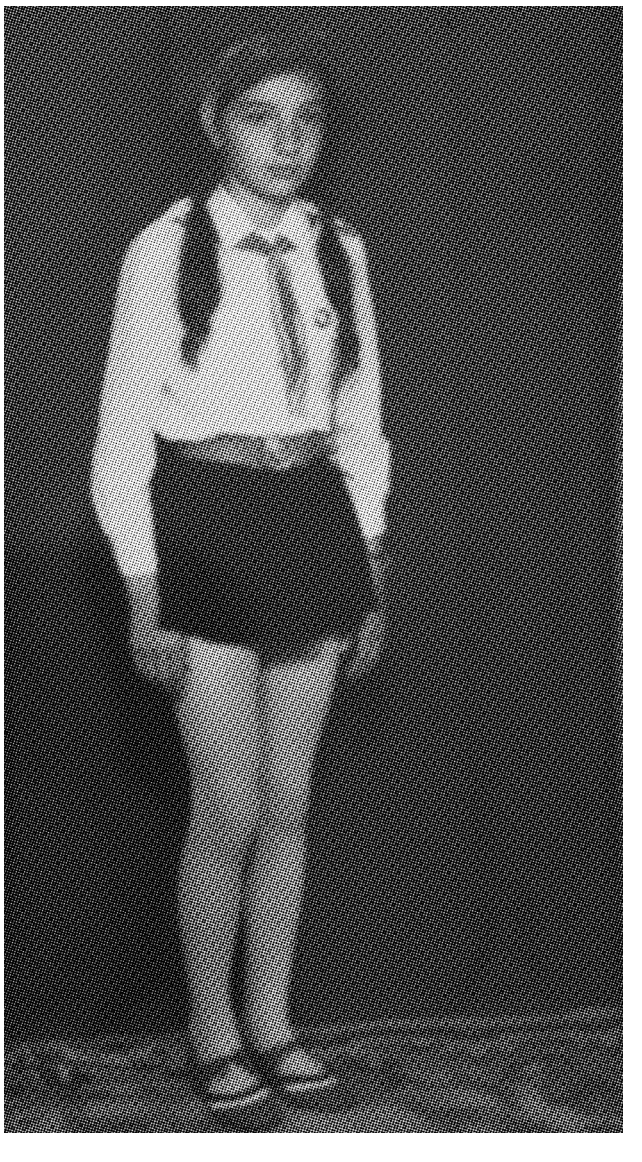
The works stopped in ’44. Romania lost the war. Part of the gear was sent to Siberia. Then, it was sent back. During the period of sovietization that followed, Romania was part of Stalin’s project of external expansion and arming, and works on the Ucea powder factory resumed in ’48. It would produce powder, nitrogen and oxygen in ’54. The Ucea factory became the Sovromchim Mill. The city would first be called The Ucea Colony, and would be placed on the left bank of the river with the same name, on soft rocks, between the already existing railway and Corbisor.

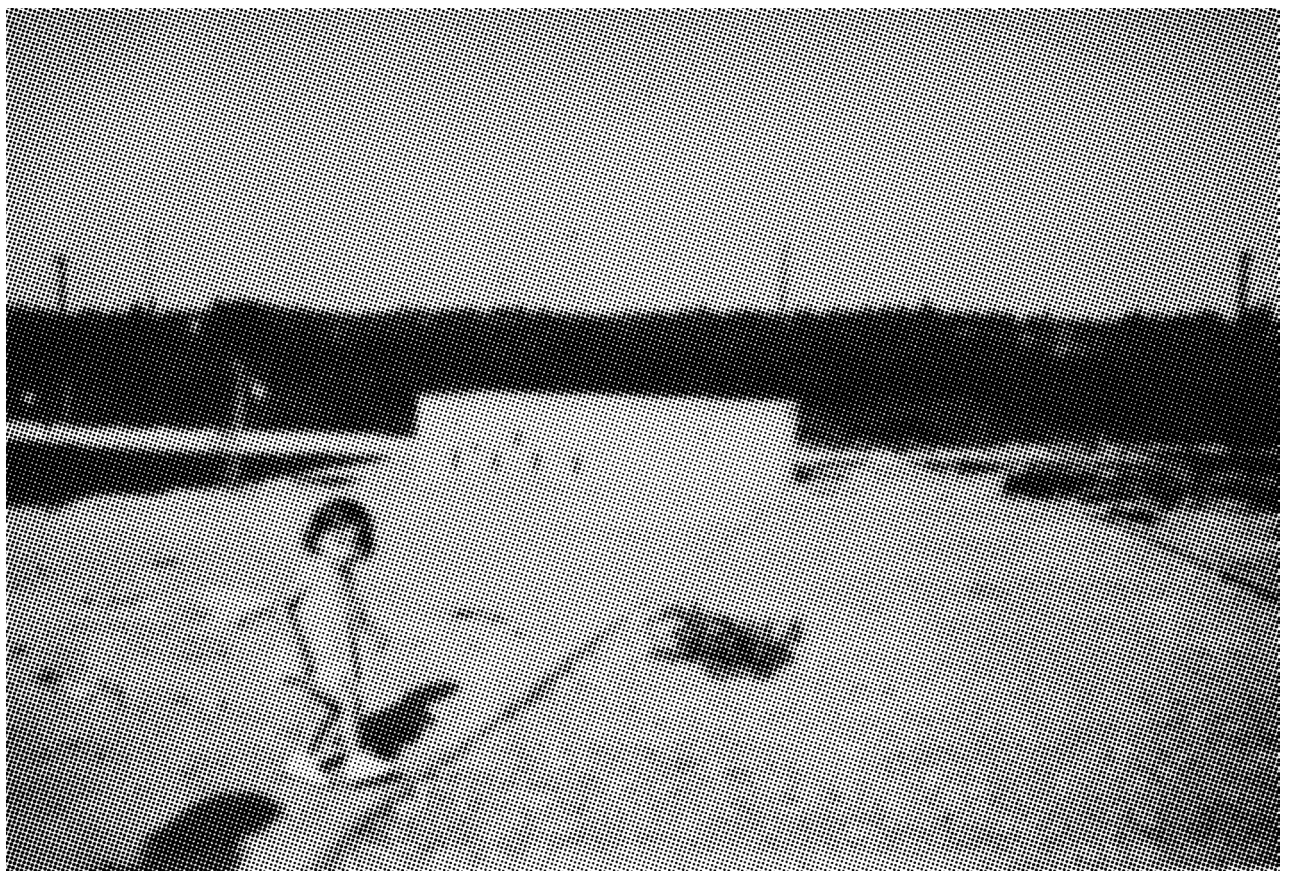
The founding act is written in Russian and contains a functional description of the planning of the Ucea Colony. The following official texts are different; they relate and glorify the heroic youth of the proletarian city of Victoria, “the first scion of the people’s power”. The city where the new man was born. A model city. Young standard. Cut out from the national landscape as a unique place, where happiness is stipulated.

The recipe of this happiness is presented as a permanent collective mobilization on the working site (or inside the mill), an appetite for sacrifice and self-obliteration.

An enthusiastic adhesion and submission to the values of the dominant ideology. A fusion inside of/with a heavenly landscape. Ultimately, a youth without old age.

Almost at the same time as the city’s construction from concrete, the bureaucratic state took to designing the social community of those who would give it meaning and life. It created learning and cultural socialization institutions.





It watched over the population's demography and fertility. It listed a series of prescriptions of permitted or forbidden social practices. It decided what is right and what is wrong, what to believe in, what to hope for, what is beautiful and what is not. It organized and monitored everything that moved inside the city. It enrooted the population and controlled its mobility and imagination.

From different positions and social roles, all of the inhabitants were subject to the premises of a utopian city. They lived through the history of a utopia and through its decline.

2.

I'm 6 years old. It's June. End of the school year. At the workers' club, they're handing the academic awards, based on the classes. I am in grade I "D". I am studying in the German section, although I can't speak any. My teacher's name is Erika Scheiner. She is from Sibiu. I am in the room with my mother. I didn't receive an award, or a crown. I am mentioned. I am confused. Much later, my mother told me that we went home. "I sat in the green chair, do you remember? You came into my arms and we stayed that way. You didn't say a word. I didn't say a word either. But I understood what was on your mind." For the first time, I was seeing the world outside me (ordered, hierarchic, festive, but also hostile to any anomaly, repetitive, nosy), beyond my child's universe. The way it looked at you and you looked at it. I decided to close my eyes.

I'm 11 years old. I have the body of a boy. I graduated from the 5th grade. The Romanian section. My mother gave me 10 lei and sent me to the photographer's. Alone. I am dressed in my "pioneer" uniform. I'm wearing white tights, a short pleated skirt with a belt bearing the country's emblem, a white shirt with a "pioneer" tie with a hem in the three colors of the flag. My hair is braided into two pigtails, I'm wearing a headband and, over it, a flower crown that I'm bearing the way Jesus bore his cross. I am the same as the others.

I'm 18 years old. It's June. I graduated from the industrial high school. Mathematics-mechanics. I'm standing inside the Ucea train station. I'm leaving to pass my university admission exam. On the platform there are 3 priests in black robes. Three heavy signs. I hurry to search for a cracked window, to break the power of the sign. The fast train enters the station. At the last minute I discover, between the bars, the window of a storage room. It's broken. I get on the train. And never return.

Where was I?

3.

Utopia, this nowhere territory is defined paradoxically by a place, a space that it delimitates and occupies. The isolation of an imaginary world is specific to each utopia. A concentrational universe, as Cioran says, where "le mal n'effleure pas, où l'on bénit le travail et où personne ne craint la mort"[1]. At first sight, Victoria speaks of an ideal, homogeneous society, devoid of conflict, where private and institutional initiatives converge miraculously; a society with no religious residue, no archives, no worries about tomorrow. A place that no one leaves.

From a little archeological research in the secret archives of the CNSAS (if they were still needed) and especially from the reenactment, with the help of Victoria's inhabitants, of the Communist era, a completely different utopia is revealed. One that was placed outside the city, beyond the national borders, in the constellation of "abroad". The bureaucratic state was obsessed with the "fugitives". With those who intended to or only dreamed of leaving Victoria and the country. The suspicion was chronic. A whole system of surveillance of the population was dedicated to this "concern". Each gesture, each word, each action, each facial expression, each contact, was carefully looked into, in case it could constitute a clue related to an escape over the borders. Where milk and honey flows. Where men could have long hair and drive a Mercedes and women could swallow contraceptive pills and love freely. Beyond the generalized surveillance technology, we notice here how widespread among the inhabitants of Victoria was the dream of "running away" from a place that meant to embody and preserve a successful, complete utopia that no one leaves. As René Schérer[2] remarked: any utopia contains a nomadic perspective. Neglecting a closed-off space, the utopia introduces a dimension of becoming, of projection unto "elsewhere". After all, a utopia does not isolate and does not limit itself to an imaginary space. The spirit of a utopia is a vagabond spirit.

1 E Cioran, Œuvres, Histoire et utopie, Gallimard,1995, p. 1057

2 Notes pour une utopie nomade, in Tumultes nr.5/1994 dossier Figure de l'étranger, p.72

Reimagining the New Man in the context of Victoria City (Red Ucea)

Ştefan Rusu

‘Reimagining the New Man’ workshop format was designed to explore by means of contemporary art (film, video footage, photography and other cultural artefacts) the image of cultural worker and the process of labour in the context of industrialisation of Victoria City. Following the slogan ‘Build a plant and civilization will follow’, like Magnitogorsk, Nova Hut, Dimitrovgrad’s or Visaginas, the birth of Victoria City, due to the internal mobility of workers, remains one of the most interesting social experiments.

The aim of the workshop was to facilitate the knowledge about the role of cultural producer during socialist era city development and industrialisation through use of new methodology to produce media art projects based on archival sources and in-situ collected material.

This format was initially tested in Tajikistan under the title ‘Re-imaging the New Man’ as a temporary platform for in-depth study of archival film footage, as well as transformation of cinematic language into digital format. Dealing with the context of a post-communist condition of society was a way to keep in mind a temporary bridge between the socialist period when Romania become an industrialised country, and the situation after the collapse of Eastern bloc when things changed dramatically. A reference to that moment of recent history opens up a set of archival sources originated in state and private archives (audio recordings, photos, analogue films, prints, posters, etc.), which may serve as a primary source for artworks.

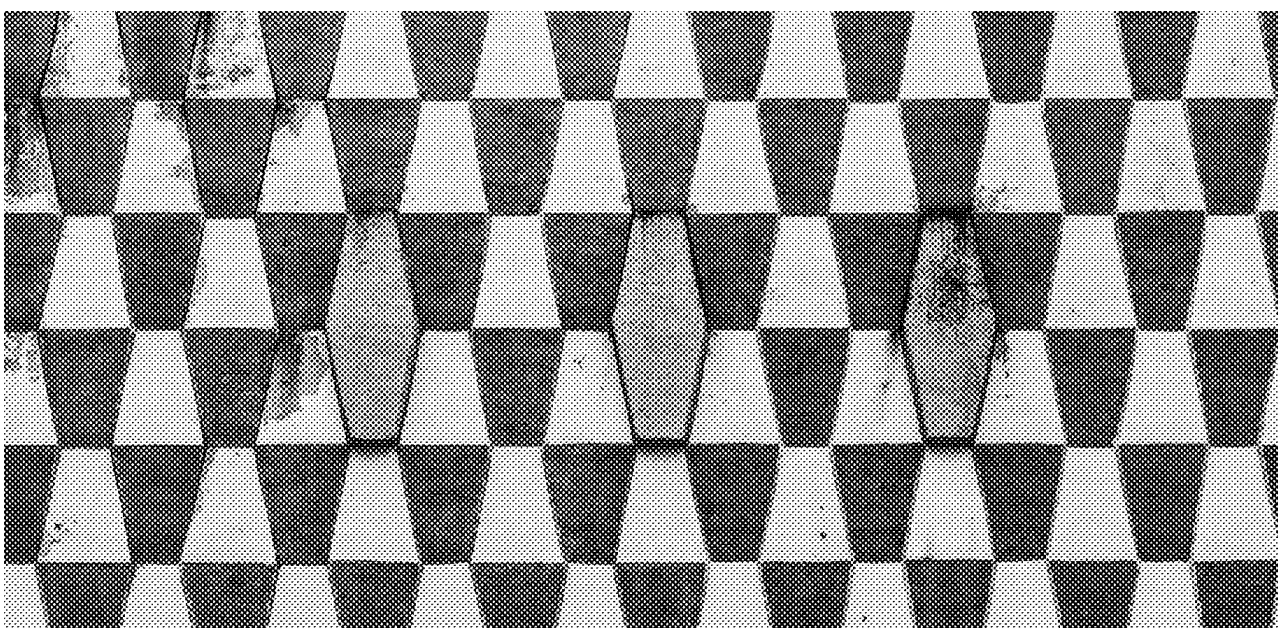
Obviously when you approach an industrial complex which ceased to exist decades ago, the traces of a recent history are not easy to find; the biggest part of the chemical plant was gradually dismantled and washed away through time. Still, there was a hope to identify visual evidence about the development of the city, as well the life of the Victoria’s inhabitants. We looked for photographic images, analogue movies (8-mm, 16-mm film) of socialist period depicting the main directions of the society development (economics, political education, urban development, health, youth involvement, youth organisations in Socialist Romania, etc.). While approaching the city context we propose besides the film archive (as far as we can access) to expand the investigation by researching the photo archives and written documentation, so that we do not limit ourselves only to video and film as a purpose, and so that students/participants can propose other formats, such as writing essays, photo projects, installations, etc.).

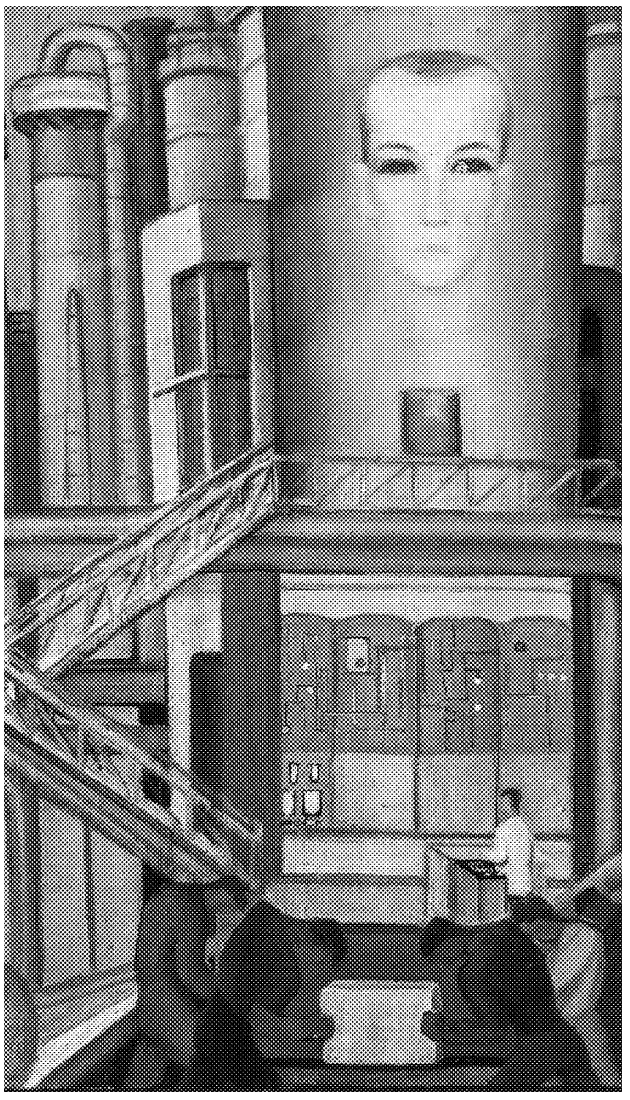
The main subjects to be explored during the workshop were the following: the image of ‘new man’ (cultural worker), the urbanisation of Victoria City (Red Ucea) and the process of residential differentiation along with the social codes that are important for investigation.

Exploring the image of cultural worker:

The city of Victoria has been synonymous from all points of view with the chemical plant, around which the community was formed. In 1956, seven years after its establishment it already had 2,700 inhabitants, and in the 1980s the population tripled.

The new socialist cities were seen as ‘laboratories’ for moulding a new lifestyle centered on the idea of “cultural work”. The construction of Victoria City, determined the retrieval of ideological lines in the project of (re)defining the ’worker’s spirit’. The local archives from 2nd March 1946 (Vic-





toria Chemical Plant's Archive Nr. 31/1945-1946) mention the division of sporting and cultural activities into three groups: administrative, sports (athletics section including, hiking, biking and bowling) and cultural (music section including choir, instruments, chamber music, pop music, literary department, library, theatre, game casino - "specifying chess, backgammon, etc."- and publications, including the departmental conferences and popularization courses, cinema, screenings).

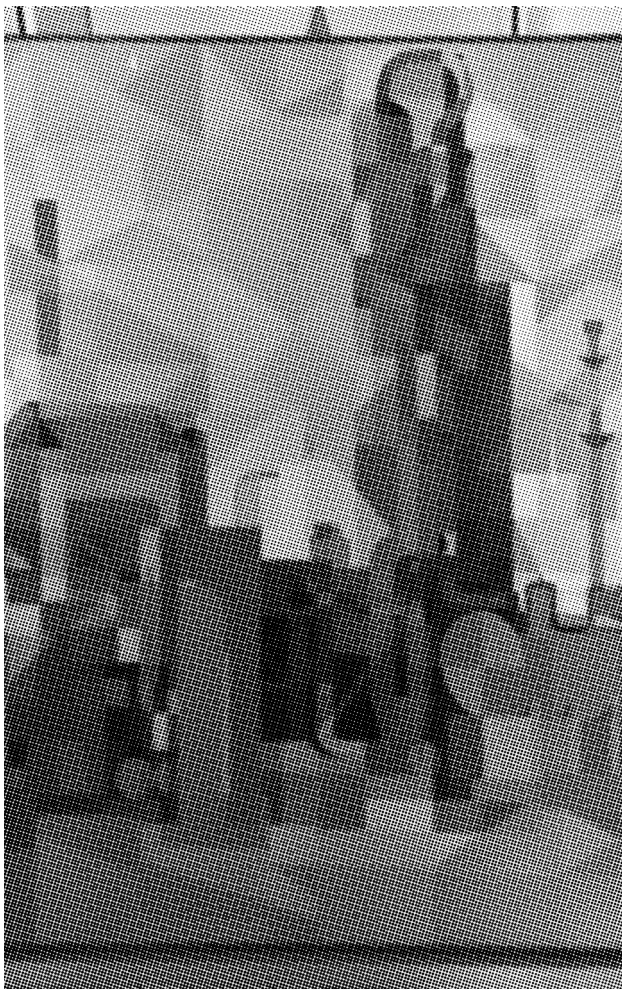
The process of urbanization of Victoria City:

"Victoria is the first new city to appear on the map of the Romanian People's Republic. Everything that happens here in the settlement at the foot of Fagaras is directly related to the existence of the chemical plant. You can find in every house, or apartment where a worker, engineer or technician involved in the sphere of chemistry (...)". Functionalist and formalist tendencies, representative for the western ideas of the time, have been rejected, whereas the socialist realist approach national in form, socialist in content was to be followed. Thus, the study of national and traditional architecture became essential, generating external ornamentation and detailing; soviet symbols - the hammer and sickle, as well as the five-point star are placed together with traditional motifs. This is the case of the chemical plant administrative building. The current status of Victoria is that it could potentially become a large village. People are no longer at work, they are simply gone. The young people all went to work abroad. At the 1992 census there were 10,142 inhabitants, and at the last census the population had reached 7,310 inhabitants. We can say that the city disappeared from Romania. In order for the city to survive, it has to reinvent itself, try to live on agriculture or tourism. Victoria is located at the foot of the Fagaras mountains. You can easily reach the Negoiu and Moldoveanu Peaks, and the scenery is spectacular. There are also enough agricultural lands. Attracting tourists with outdoor sports and mountain tours can be a new start for Victoria.

The processes of residential differentiation:

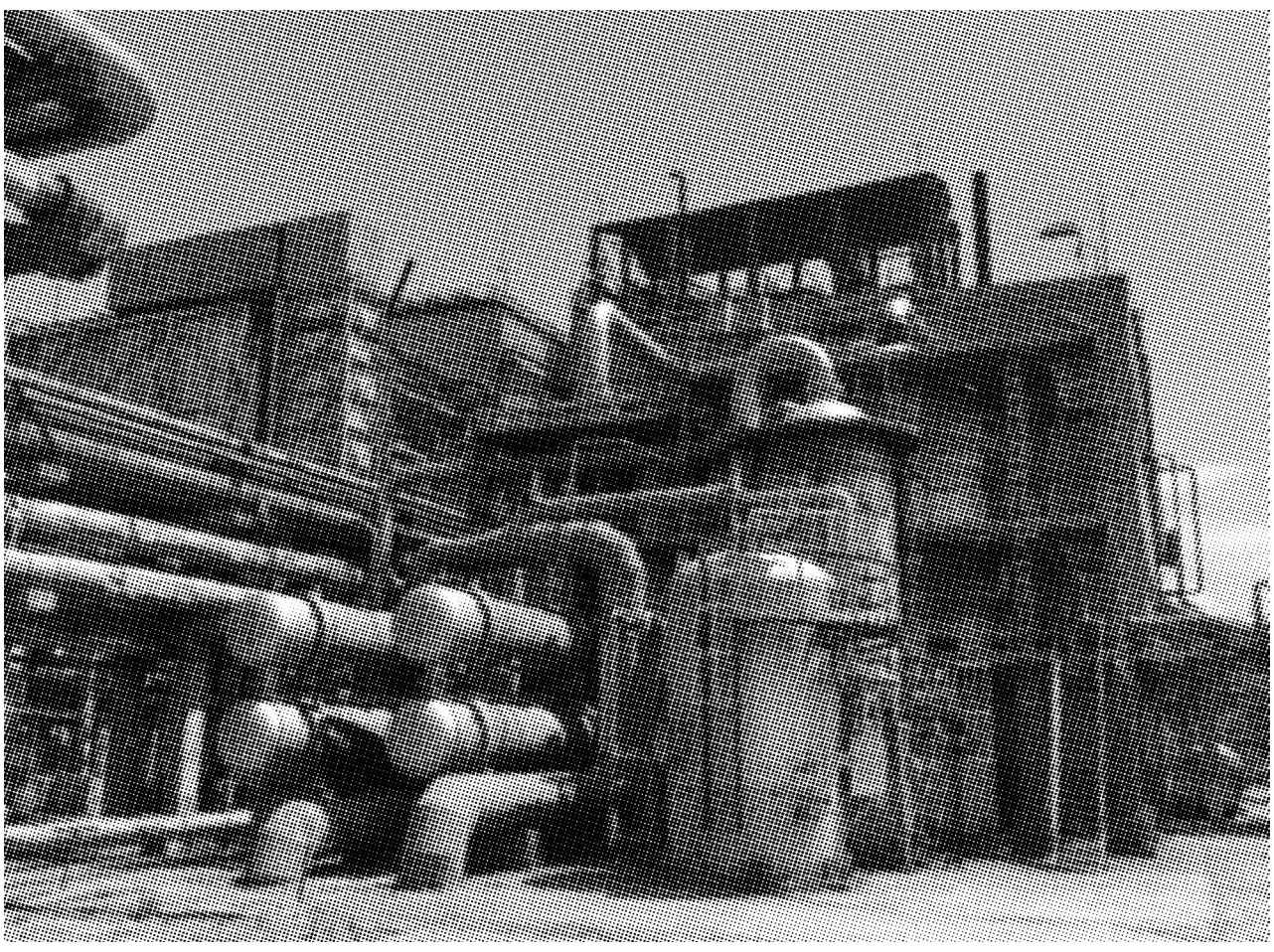
During the state socialist era the socialist ideology, the political and economic system under which the cities developed, brought about similarities in their development processes as well as similarities in terms of outcomes. By the late 1950s development priorities were being re-assessed. This resulted in an increase in public funding for housing production. Extensive urban development characterised the development of Victoria City during the following three decades.

People in higher socio-occupational positions were favored in the allocation of dwellings in the first modern housing estates of the 1960s, but by the 1970s, access became more equal for households in all social strata. In the 1980s, the volume of housing production decreased following the economic recession. The broad residential differentiation between the housing estates was related to the time of their construction, tenure and local factors.



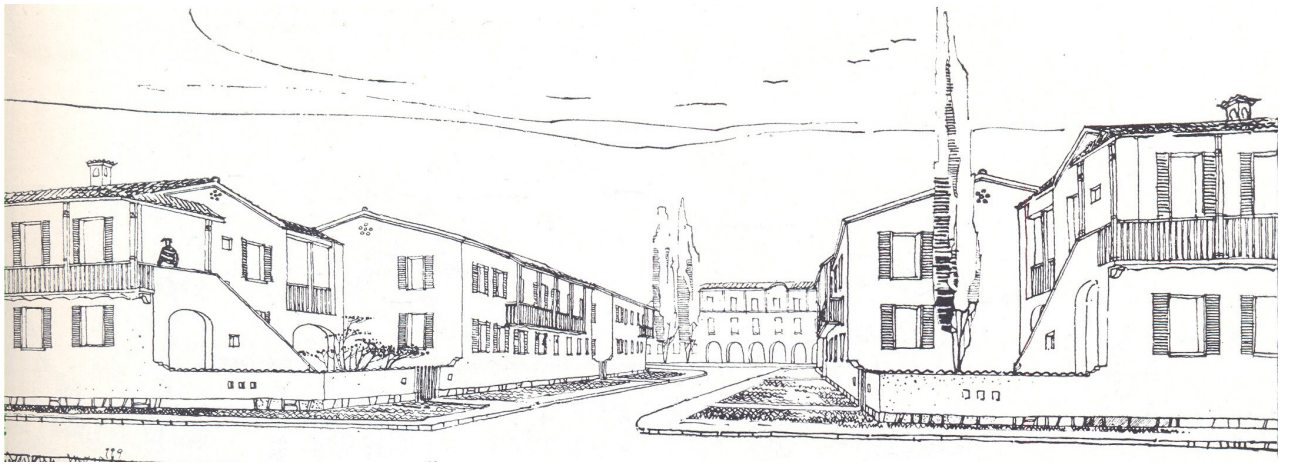
Conclusion:

Ideally the workshop should start with a theoretical section with a series of lectures specifically focused on identified subjects, along with film screenings and practical laboratories and preceded by the preparatory work on research and collection of archival material from various sources dealing with work at the chemical plant, the private lives of residents, and the city. In fact, some of the topics of 'Utopic cities, programmed societies' programme developed a theoretical input on broader spectrum of issues, but the missing link was insufficient archival materials, so the participants could rely on observation, interviews and documentation.



Reshaping the Cities. Reloading Tradition

Irina Tulbure



Socialist realist architecture was often received with a lack of appreciation. This perspective was mainly due to the fact that the initiation of the first socialist realist projects in the 1930s was meant to give an alternative to the Russian constructivist architecture. Therefore socialist realist architecture was perceived first of all as an anti-modern(ist) architecture; it was an architecture that was reiterating - through an abundance of ornamental elements - times that were already left behind by the architects eager to build a modern world.

During the 1970s the surprising attempt to (re)evaluate the socialist realist thinking in architecture emerged in several debates published by different architectural magazines (see Architese, Architecture d'Aujour'hui)[1]. This found the very strong position of Anatole Kopp[2] and Claude Schnaidt who emphasised the falseness of socialist realist architecture and the actual disjunction between its aesthetic aspect and the true reality behind the political system that was behind socialist realism. In his book The Future of Architecture (2012), Jean Louis Cohen includes manifestations such as socialist realist architecture in a more general 'spectrum of classicisms and traditionalisms' of the late interwar period; pointing to the idea that socialist realist architecture might represent 'the most theoretically complex form of classicism'[3]. Meanwhile, the post-war period is seen within its conflict with the 'diffusion of modernism'[4].

In fact, after the Second World War, the theory of socialist realism was adjusted in order to cover the 'newly conquered' territories. In the 1930s the socialist realist theory meant the selection (politically referenced) of the most relevant universal architectural tradition, while, around the 1950s[5] the socialist realist architecture was intended to be a language (instrument) of the political regime, easier to be understood by the masses and directly reflected in the territorial (local / national) characteristics[6]. That meant the inclusion of much more explicit symbolic elements in the ornamental display, a reduction of the expressive details and a reference to the local tradition.

Artificial, or perhaps sometimes genuine, debates over the proper traditional sources of the 'national form' of (socialist realist) architecture replaced the liberal discourse over the modernity in the Eastern Europe. Elements of the local renaissance were reiterated in the architecture of the administrative buildings of the new industrial town of Nowa Huta (Poland), details of local baroque adorned the block of flats in the industrial town of Câmpia Turzii (Romania) and so on. These architectural productions were (and are still) generally seen as direct results of a politically conceived and controlled theory/mechanism[7]. In support of this perspective it must be noted that sometimes deviations from the political directions were harshly criticized[8]; since works considered certified were abundantly published and became symbols and the exemplary models to be followed.

There is still an important amount of examples that were not entirely considered fitted for bearing the political message and not entirely deviant; they are sometimes illustrating a thinking that remained in between the traditional approaches of the late interwar period and the new requirements for the 'national form'. Some arbitrary examples for the Romanian case: the residential areas of low rise block of flats in Hunedoara or Năvodari, different projects for train stations or specific examples as the Workers' Palace in Reşiţa.

Such a perspective could (partially) offer an alternative to the idea of the intimate relation between the political thinking and the architectural form (that eliminates any possible consideration for the formal aspect) by rethinking the formal aspect as a link to the previous architectural practice. On the other hand a (re)evaluation of socialist realist architecture should consider a perspective that accepts the existence of an inconvenient past, without denying it.

1 Reference to the subject in: Jean Louis Cohen, "Le détour par l'Italie" in Esprit, nr. 109, 1985; Michael Hays ed., Architecture Theory since 1968, MIT University Press, 1998.

2 During the 70s Anatole Kopp published three of the crucial books on the architecture and urban thinking of the 20s in Russia and on the Stalinist architecture.

3 Jean Louis Cohen, The Future of Architecture. Since 1889, Ed. Phaidon, 2012, p. 212, 214; chapter 17 of the book is entitled „The spectrum of classicisms and traditionalisms" and the author points out the resistance to the modernist movement indicating the diversity of approaches of the classicism and of the local tradition.

4 Ibidem, p. 358

5 It is a common knowledge that after the second World War, the Socialist Realism was imposed to the Eastern European countries that where under the influence of the Stalinist regime; having in most of the cases, as climax the year 1952 and as coda, the years that followed the notorious discourse of Nikita Khrushchev (1954) .

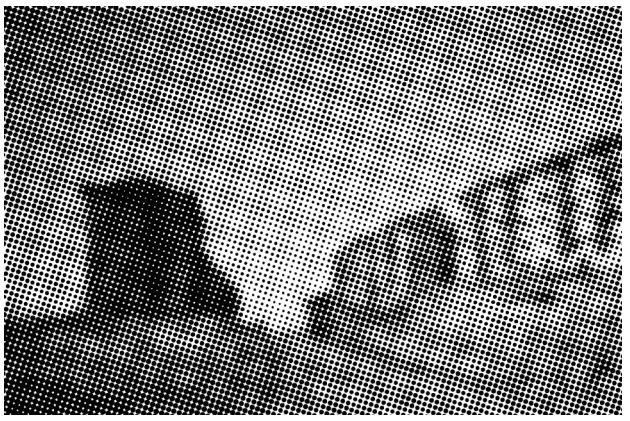
6 The slogan „socialist in content, national in form" was used to synthetically explain and spread the notion of Socialist Realism.

7 Specifically Socialis Realism was explain as being a „method" not an act of creation in order to explain the conjunction between the politics and the formal expression of any kind of art.

8 In the Romanian context at least two cases can be emphasized: the case of modernist architect Henrietta Delavrancea Gibory who explained in an article of Arhitectura magazine, in a self critical manner, her misunderstanding of the socialist realist ideas or the case of the National Opera House (architect Octav Doicescu) that was the subject of an acid critique in the party's main journal and that suffered a transformation of the façade immediately after.

What are Shrinking Cities?

Ilinca Păun Constantinescu



Tudor Constantinescu
Anina, Orașul Nou district
Digital, 2015 (50x33cm)

Shrinkage is the result of a complex interplay of factors. As such, it describes a phenomenon that

produces both quantitative and qualitative changes at the city or neighbourhood scale. It includes the

following aspects:

Social and cultural shrinkage: closures of urban facilities (theatres, cinemas, sports facilities, etc.)

Weakened communities

Physical shrinkage: abandonment of buildings and public spaces; dilapidation or demolition works outnumber construction works

Economic shrinkage: lack of jobs; falling property values; etc.

Demographic shrinkage: the global indicator that measures population loss over a certain period.

The Shrinking Cities in Romania project, conceived by architect and curator Ilinca Păun Constantinescu, took shape after research that began more than ten years ago. Statistical data shows that most Romanian cities, of different sizes and types (small touristic towns, industrial, agricultural towns, harbours by the Danube) are facing various forms of decline: socio-cultural, economic, physical, demographic. Half of the country's cities currently have 20% fewer residents than in the 1990s. This phenomenon is insufficiently discussed, although more than a decade has passed since it was first theorised by German researchers.

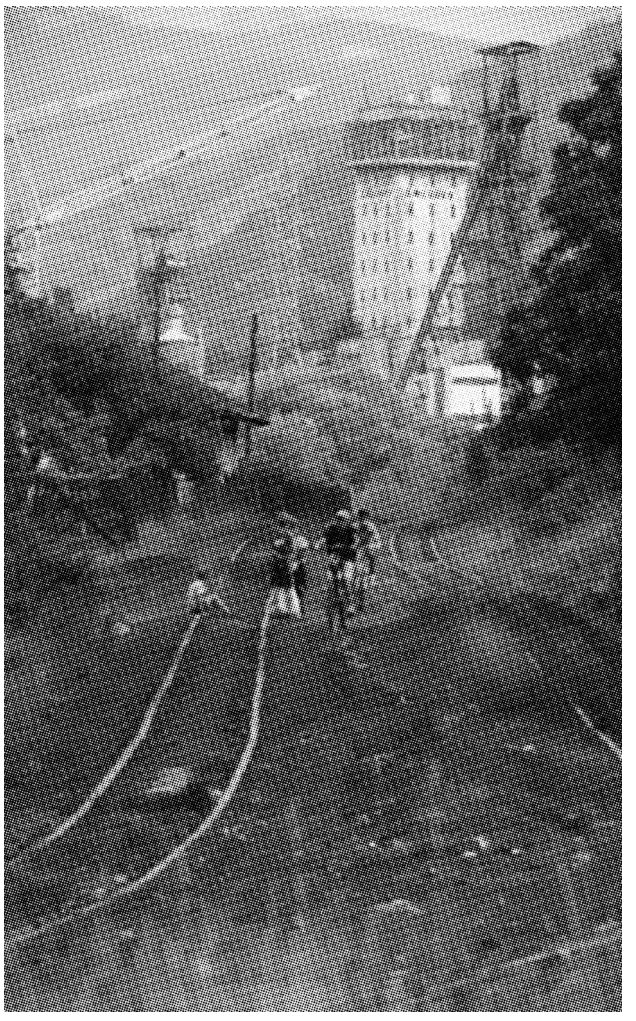
Gathering a large group of academics, researchers, artists, architects, urban planners and hosting several recurring events, Shrinking Cities in Romania is a pioneering initiative to raise awareness about an acute and pervasive, yet too little discussed matter, aiming to create a positive perspective on a negative phenomenon. Shrinkage can be a vector for modernization and innovation, re-use, alternative resources, artistic creation, and revaluation of interpersonal relationships.

In terms of urbanisation, understood as the concentration of population in cities, the communist period was characterized by growth, while the post-communist one by decline. One could interpret the current crisis of Romanian cities as an extended process of reinvention, of self-organisation in the long term, as a natural reaction to the constraints of a centralised system. Many studies have approached the city as a living organism; like the body, the city goes from birth through maturity toward stability or demise.

In contrast to the surge of urbanization of the previous decades, the towns artificially created in the 2000s, along with the paradoxical stasis of the share of urban population over the past thirty years, are clear evidence of the decline of urbanisation rates and of a series of problems with the urban network. Urban planners and geographers have pointed out several issues with the territorial distribution of cities. In addition to the relatively low urbanisation rate (around 50% today), cities and towns are unevenly distributed throughout the country, resulting in weak polarization. Further, there are areas with not one town or city within a thirty-kilometre radius or more, there is no real competition among cities, and vacant areas around large cities continue to expand.

The most vulnerable elements in the urban network are small towns. While large cities are relatively stable and provide both diversity and opportunities and most mid-sized cities have successfully adapted to the profound transformations of the communist era, the basis of the urban pyramid is the one most affected by shrinkage. Among the **industrial towns** (1), mining towns form a category of their own (Baia Sprie, Anina, Bălan, Brad, Cavnic, Motru, Rovinari, Moldova Nouă, Țicleni, and the towns in the Jiu Valley). As a result of regional policies and the absence of genuine strategies of diversification, the areas that relied on a single industry, such as Victoria, were deeply affected by economic restructuring, and the massive unemployment and poverty that ensued. But industrial towns that are very different in terms of profile (metallurgy, coal mining, chemical), size (small, >20,000 residents, medium-small, medium-big), history (established in the Middle Ages, early twentieth century, during the Soviet-style socialist era or during the period of centralised economy) face similar problems. Declining or abandoned areas quickly appeared here, a process often enhanced by poor, uneven infrastructure, leading to high contrasts between regions. Most of the industrial sites were abandoned shortly after the Revolution, with no intention to repurpose or rehabilitate them. Reluctant to invest in cleaning up and converting old industrial brownfields, developers preferred to build on land already connected to the transport network. These actions had a huge impact, not only on the economy, but also on the society, on the people. In addition to the lack of job opportunities and widespread poverty, the sterile social life is one of the main causes of migration and urban shrinkage.

The former industrial towns represent indeed the majority of Romanian shrinking cities, but they are not the only ones in a state of decline. Another category consists of **small tourist towns** (2) whose facilities—some of them architectural heritage—are temporarily or permanently abandoned (e.g., Băile Herculane, Borsec, Solca, Băile Govora, Techirghiol, and Căciulata). Given that these towns have preserved a positive image, revitalization appears to be the obvious solution here, but it depends on administrative and economic decisions



Tudor Constantinescu
Lonea, children playing
on the railroad tracks to Petrila Coal Mine
Digital, 2010 (33x50cm)

that, more often than not, are hindered by disputes over ownership. So, in spite of an obvious potential for regeneration, the towns in this category remain vulnerable. A third group is represented by declining **Danube port towns** (3), such as Sulina, Corabia, Turnu Măgurele, Zimnicea. They are indeed some of the most interesting small or medium-small Romanian towns due to their unique urban layouts designed in the nineteenth century, their position within the country, both peripheral and open, and the similar deeply rural surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the strongest potential driver of growth, the Danube, does not currently play a significant role in their urban life. Another category strongly affected by shrinkage are **agrarian towns** (4), former villages or communes built around agricultural production, which did not have a chance to develop an urban identity, e.g., Isaccea, Vânju Mare, Bereşti, Darabani, Babadag, Curtici. Usually situated in the lowland areas, these towns are too far away from major cities and to a large extent disconnected from infrastructure. Hastily developed in the last decade of communist rule, they are characterized by forms of urban dwelling artificially implanted in a rural setting and small industrial areas on the peripheries.

The ruralisation of the urban is yet another characteristic of small towns worth examining. This can be either a manifestation of continuity, in that the rural character was never lost, or a consequence of poverty, a state of regression. Therefore, ruralisation is to be understood here, on the one hand, as a return to farming activities and, on the other hand, as a consequence of reverse migration, i.e., 'young retirees' and recent workforce in the 1990s[1] and the workers laid off in the 2000s turn to agriculture as a means of subsistence.

Another recurring observation from the case studies under analysis is the gradual demise of urban attributes—from the closure or fragmentation of cultural or public commercial facilities, such as Houses of Culture, cinemas, "commercial complexes", or department store buildings, replaced by small temporary businesses or corner shops, which are more dynamic and easily managed, to extreme poverty cases where the residents give up basic urban utilities, such as central heating, water supply, because the costs are too high in relation to their incomes. At the other end of the spectrum, the ruralisation trend can be a virtue

Victoria, playground in front of the blocks of flats
Digital, (50x33cm)
Photo credit: Tudor Constantinescu, 2012

translated into a deliberate life choice, and not an expression of backwardness. Reactivating traditional lifestyles, while integrating modern comforts, is after all one of the major preoccupations of contemporary architecture. Perhaps some of these towns with problematic identities and weak urban features, characterised by a strong tendency toward ruralisation, should be encouraged to transform so as to stay true to their main features, i.e., to become a type of city where modern comforts do not translate into an ill-fitting urban attribute. There are also small towns with urban features that are an untapped potential. Their identities could be easily reactivated or reinvented. In any case, the future of these places must be planned as part of the whole system; there can be no development scenario in isolation given that small towns are functionally dependent on the larger ones.

What is to be done then? Indeed, whatever analytical lens one might use, the situation of Romanian cities, particularly small and mid-sized ones, is a matter of concern; but that challenge even makes it more exciting. As history has shown repeatedly, a crisis situation can be turned into an opportunity for improvement. Temporary uses, cultural forms of protest, participatory architectural or landscape micro-projects can be solutions to the Romanian urban crisis. The first step is to use the vacant spaces, and from there, gradually build a broader vision and strategy.

Since the phenomenon of urban shrinkage still needs to be acknowledged in Romania, the current situation is characterised by small-scale bottom-up actions and not by a national-level strategy. But even worse is that local authorities often misconstrue the scale of the decline and the very notion of community. Hence, one could distinguish the following four attitudes toward urban decline[2]:(1) ignoring it altogether; (2) acknowledging it without accepting it; (3) some degree of acceptance but no public discussion; (4) acceptance and action, i.e., taking the necessary steps to address this situation and overcome the negative consequences. Local administrations in Romania generally fall in the first or the second category, but the public perception is dominated by ignorance.

After all, urban shrinkage can be a source of creativity, a driver of modernisation and innovation, of repurposing and embracing alternative resources, of reassessing human relationships. "Direct participation is essential to planning," researchers of urban shrinkage like Wiechmann, Rink or Haase claim. But such an approach requires a genuine preoccupation from the local decision-makers to understand social life and actual problems by encouraging citizen involvement in governance processes and social economy, in the co-production of public services.

Further, meaningful, sustainable change can only come from within these communities, and not from directives sent down from far away at the top where real knowledge of the problem lacks altogether. The starting point for shrinking cities should be to focus on improving the quality of life using locally available resources and a practical approach to identify and enhance the positive features of underdeveloped, peripheral areas and to implement high visibility micro-projects easily accessible for their residents. The city of the future might be smaller, but it is up to us to make it much better.

1 Under Decree-law no. 60 of March 1990, a large number of employees (in state-owned companies) were incentivized to retire early. Only from 1990 to 1992, under President Ion Iliescu and Prime Minister Petre Roman, the number of retirees increased by 600,000.

2 K. Pallagst, T. Wiechmann, C. Martinez-Fernandez (eds), Shrinking Cities. International Perspectives and Policy Implications (New York: Routledge, 2014).

Cybernetics and Fiction

Georg Trogemann

This article addresses different forms of fiction that are involved in cybernetic thinking. While cybernetics has long since lost its position as a leading transdisciplinary science, cybernetic thinking, its terminology and approaches, are still present in various contemporary scientific fields. In addition, the vision of a better future enabled by new technologies is perhaps more than ever the predominant utopia in our society. The most popular utopias of our time—artificial intelligence and the so-called singularity, transhumanism, nanotechnology, and synthetic biology, but also quite small and technologically simple things such as blockchain systems—all show the characteristics of technological utopias. As the early Chilean Project Cybersyn (conducted during the presidency of Salvador Allende in 1971-73, see Figure 1) shows, cybernetics was involved in an interplay between utopia, politics, and technology from the very beginning. The social role of technologies and their political and economic instrumentalization is obviously not so different nowadays. Although there are plenty of examples that could clearly illustrate the role of cybernetic fictions as a medium for social utopias, the focus of the presentation is not cybernetic fictions such as the Cybersyn project and their role in society. Instead it concentrates on (1) fictional imprints that are inevitably part of our scientific and technological thinking, as philosopher Hans Vaihinger showed at the end of the 19th century and (2) how an idea by the cyberneticist Gregory Bateson can help us understand that if we wish to master today's problems, not only do our technological utopias and aims for the future have to change, but also the way we think about technology.

In The Philosophy of As If (1911), Hans Vaihinger[1] argues that as human beings we can never know the reality of the world. As a consequence we construct systems of thought and then take them for reality. In everyday live, but also in science, we behave "as if" the world

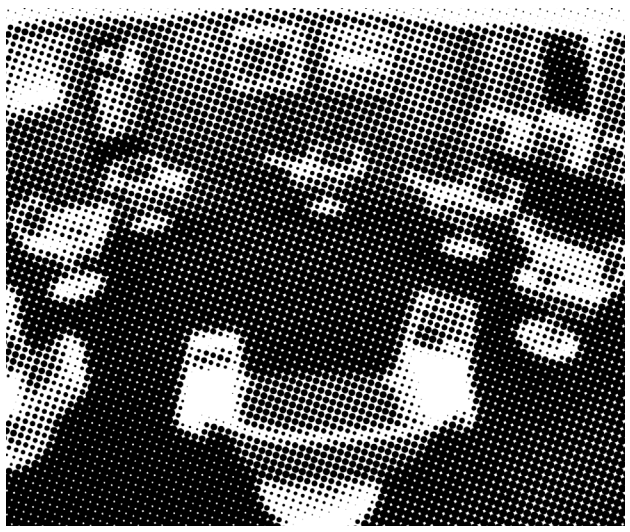


Figure 1: Proyecto Synco, Chile 1971-73.

matches our fictions. But according to Vaihinger there is nothing wrong with these fictions (semi-fictions or half-fictions as Vaihinger calls them): "An idea whose theoretical untruth or incorrectness, and therewith its falsity, is admitted, is not for that reason practically valueless and useless; for such an idea, in spite of its theoretical nullity may have great practical importance."[2] Since we generally construct our theoretical models on the basis of fictions, it is immediately clear that cybernetics must also be based on fictions and we can thus ask: what are the fundamental fictions of cybernetics? At this point it must suffice to name a few. In fact, it turns out that the important fictions on which the field of cybernetics is based are more or less identical with the basic notions of cybernetics. Examples that Hans Vaihinger would call abstractive (neglective) fictions are: open and closed systems, the concept of information, feedback, or black boxes. Figure 2 shows a typical abstracted outline of a closed system, where any interaction between the inside and the outside of the system is forbidden: nothing crosses the border. But we know that closed systems do not exist in reality (except maybe the universe as a whole). Whether we consider a system open or closed depends on our point of view and the questions we wish to examine and answer. In this sense they are useful fictions.

Cybernetics began working, on the basis of its fundamental fictions, towards mastering human thought. This is a highly reflexive project, already practised through 2000 years of philosophy, where a being attempts, with its restricted means, to understand its own conditions. The difference this time was that this was to be achieved technologically: a thinking brain was to be built. Even before the term Artificial Intelligence was coined by the Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence (initiated by John McCarthy and held in 1956), cybernetics had already returned fundamental results in relation to this problem. If we assume the following three points were already known before the cybernetic enterprise set in, then there was only one final building block missing before the conclusion that the human brain could easily be built using electrical circuits could be reached.

The tradition of philosophy, which reduced thought and human intelligence to logical inference (another neglective fiction),

The work of George Boole who, as early as 1854, provided a formalism that described logic as mathematical symbol manipulation,

The work of Claude Shannon who in his master's thesis at the Department of Electrical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, 1937, entitled A Symbolic Analysis of Relay and Switching Circuits, describes how logical operations can be realized by electrical circuits.

The missing fictional keystone was delivered by the cyberneticist Warren McCulloch in 1943[3]. According to McCulloch, the synapses in

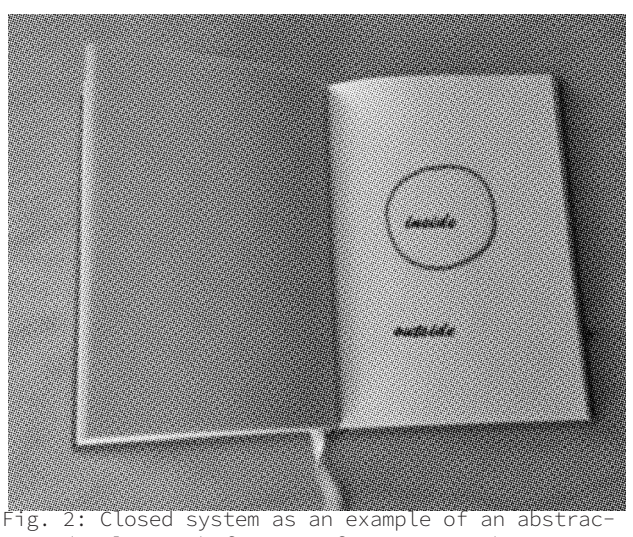


Fig. 2: Closed system as an example of an abstractive (neglective) fiction after Hans Vaihinger.

1 Hans Vaihinger, The Philosophy of As If: A System of the Theoretical, Practical and Religious Fictions of Mankind (Random Shack, 2015).

2 Ibid., Preface.

3 Warren S. McCulloch and Walter

the human brain are no more than switches that work exactly like the formal-logical operations described by Boole (see figure 3). As soon as we accept the abstractive fictions involved and furthermore assume that the ontology of the world is formally describable without any loss, then the rest should not be a long time in coming. This was, at least, the general conviction when the first wave of AI, now known as good old-fashioned Artificial Intelligence (GOFAI), began. In this way, cybernetics reduced thought to purely mechanical operations that are explicable and totally understandable with nothing left over as secret. Today we know that this was just fiction.

The fact that GOFAI was destined to run into problems and that making a brain might prove a little more difficult could have been gleaned by taking a deeper look at philosophy, but also from the work of another cyberneticist. The English cyberneticist (anthropologist, social scientist, semiotician) Gregory Bateson wrote an essay in 1964 titled The Logical Categories of Learning and Communication[4] which he submitted to the "Conference on World Views" as a position paper. It begins as follows: "All species of behavioural scientists are concerned with 'learning' in one sense or another of that word. Moreover, since 'learning' is a communicational phenomenon, all are affected by that cybernetic revolution in thought, which has occurred in the last twenty-five years". For him, learning is a central capability of living creatures and is characterized by change of some kind. But the delicate matter is obviously what kind of change. Change denotes process. But, as Bateson points out, processes are themselves subject to change. Processes may accelerate, slow down, or may undergo even deeper types of change such that at a certain point we must say "this is now a different process". Starting from this rationale, Bateson develops hierarchically ordered categories of learning beginning with zero learning (no learning) up to a principally open number of levels. All learning beyond level zero is in some degree stochastic, i.e. it contains components of trial and error. The next level of learning can be reached by generalising the process of learning of the current level.

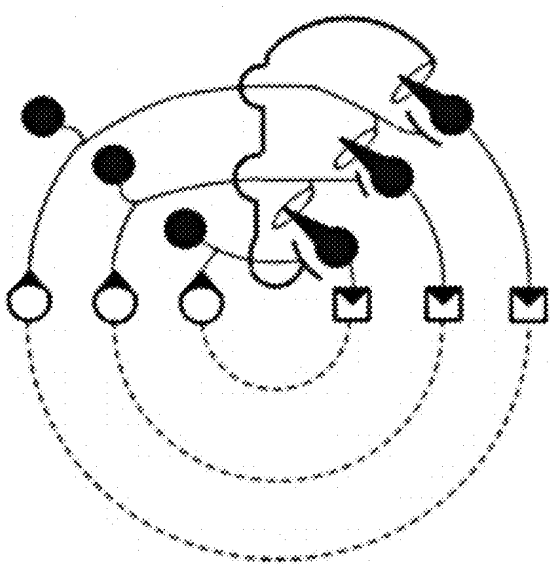


Fig. 3: Warren S. McCulloch, Walter Pitts; (1943) A Logical Calculus of the Ideas Immanent in Nervous Activity

In his own words: "Zero learning is characterized by specificity of response, which—right or wrong—is not subject to correction. Learning I is change in specificity of response by correction of errors of choice within a set of alternatives. Learning II is change in the process of Learning I, e.g., a corrective change in the set of alternatives from which choice is made, or it is a change in how the sequence of experience is punctuated."[5] And so on. Within this terminology, the classical conditioning examined by Ivan Pavlov belongs to Learning I. But the present machine learning algorithms using artificial neural networks do not go beyond level I either. The problem of learning levels is not even recognized by most scientists in the field of AI. Up to now there are only few attempts to exceed level I. Gordon Pask's experiments with electrochemical processes in the 1950s, which tried to resolve the frequency spectrum of the sound of the environment of the system, can be seen as an early attempt to realize learning beyond level I (see figure 4). Here, no restrictions were predetermined as to what the system had to learn.

A very important notion in Bateson's learning hierarchy is what he calls repeatable context: "Without the assumption of repeatable context (and the hypothesis that for the organisms which we study the sequence of experience is really somehow punctuated in this manner), it would follow that all 'learning' would be of one type: namely, all would be zero learning."[6] It is quite clear that Bateson's theory is also a fiction in the sense that we will not find hierarchically organised learning levels in our brain—levels between which we can switch like in Russell's hierarchy of logical types, to which Bateson explicitly refers. Things such as learning categories are phenomena that emerge when language reflects on itself. If we presume that universals (general terms) are human constructions then it becomes obvious that the hierarchies of learning and thinking are purely linguistic phenomena. But whether we only consider a given set of decision alternatives or jump out of the box and reflect on the general emergence of alternatives makes a big difference to our ability to act in the world. For that reason Bateson is still known in management and pedagogics today, although he is no longer recognized in informatics. Regarding AI, a consideration of learning levels would be useful because they show very precisely the poor progress we have made so far, not only with GOFAI but also with the new deep learning technologies.

What can we learn from the different cybernetic fictions we have presented thus far? What conclusions can be drawn for the society of today? Firstly, fiction is involved in any human activity. Our behaviour is based on our imagination and models we make up regarding ourselves and the world we live in. Fiction is therefore also the driving force in our technoscientific shaped living environment. Secondly, by looking at Bateson's levels of thinking – even though they are themselves fictions – we can understand that new imaginations, new narratives and particularly new notions and concepts are required to invent and implement more elaborate levels of thinking about the use of technology in our society. Technoscience urgently needs concepts that go beyond meaningless progress, innovation and a simplified technical rendering of the world as a discrete, well-defined object repository with unambiguous relations between them. Notions that allow us to invent higher level fictions about ourselves and our future.

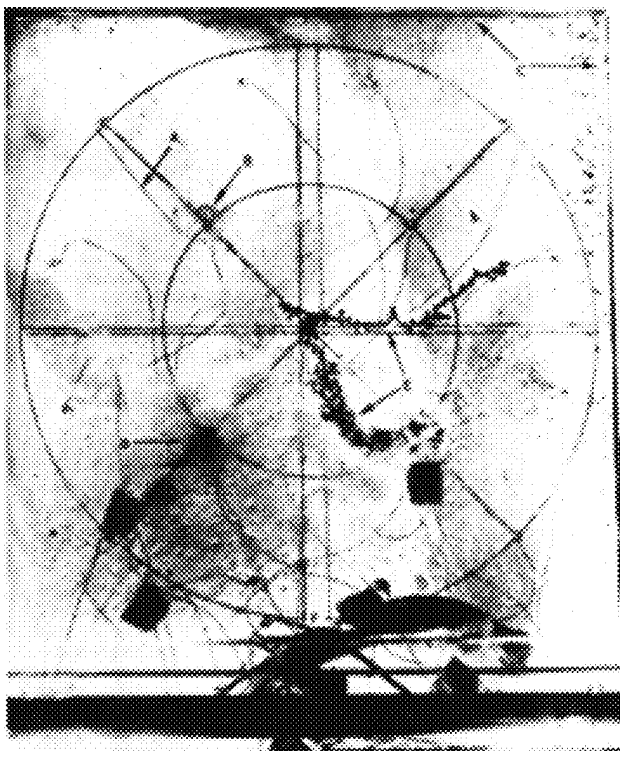


Figure 4: Gordon Pask, photograph of an electrochemical process, from "Physical analogues to the growth of a concept." (1958)

Pitts, "A Logical Calculus of Ideas Immanent in Nervous Activity", in Bulletin of Mathematical Biophysics 5 (1943): 115-33.

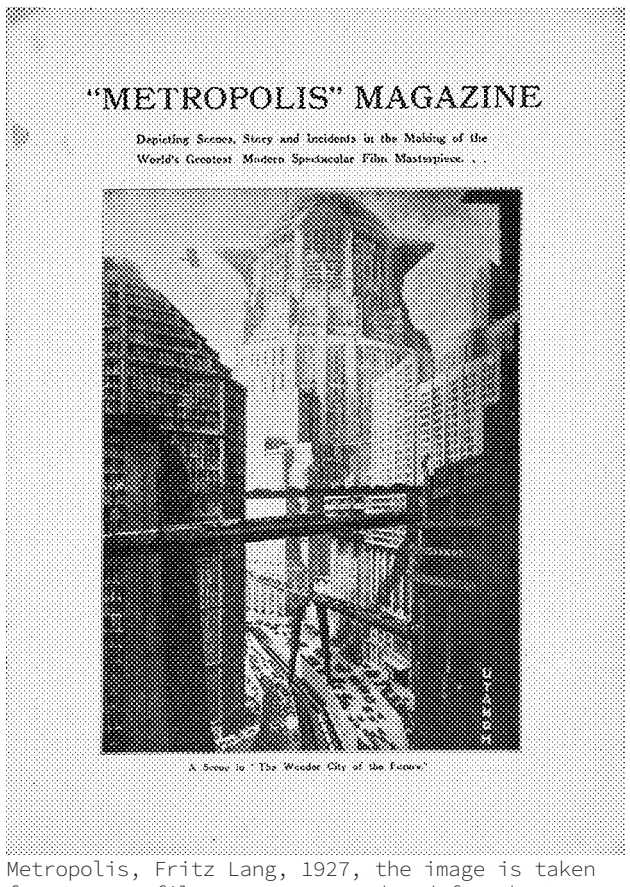
4 Gregory Bateson, "The Logical Categories of Learning and Communication," in Steps to an Ecology of Mind. Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1972).

5 Ibid., 298.

6 Ibid., 293.

Critical imagery of contemporary Science Fiction

Karin Lingnau



Metropolis, Fritz Lang, 1927, the image is taken from a rare film programme produced for the London premiere at the Marble Arch Pavilion on March 21, 1927. More images on http://socks-studio.com/2012/08/15/about-metropolis/, last accessed on 10.10.2019

Science fiction nowadays functions foremost as a tool to visualise and build utopian ideas, to make them palpable and haptic. But can the genre still uphold a certain complexity in utopian concepts? Current technological possibilities have enabled the fabrication of architectural and social utopian imagery in a wide range of media. The visual often seems to be more important than the actual critique and questioning of societal contemporary concepts through imagery. By looking at examples in film of the science fiction genre, architectural and social settings are questioned for their validity in visualising utopian ideas.

Besides being a form of entertainment often repackaging old narratives into a futuristic or alternative world setting, science fiction can be used as a tool to reflect and represent socio-political systems, to envision possible or probable settings, their development and constraints; often connected to technological changes.

Fiction as a method therefore enables us to think about possibilities and changes of actual circumstances without challenging them in a scientific or economic context. It temporarily frees us from the constraints of truth and empirical verifiability.

The following text will focus on media which is capable of visualising ideas about utopia inside the genre of science fiction, for either active (interactive: games) or passive (movies) reception. Science fiction thus becomes a tool, a world building tool, which is presenting possibilities in reference to current societies, systems, their beliefs and visions.

But is science fiction still the appropriate genre to visualise utopian ideas? Does it still hold potential for looking further, to formulate new and visionary ideas, to question current developments without losing itself in superficial and generic imagery? Are science fiction movies and games mainly shows of superficial attributes with SFX and generic images of supposedly new or futuristic ideas and technologies?

The main question will be examined using examples of film (as opposed to literature or games), focusing on their imagery and its embedded ideas. Being part of a mass market industry this also contains unarticulated ideas about the development of society according to conservative or reactionary political worldviews pictured as technological progress.

If science fiction images are considered as a kind of vehicle to represent utopia, then one of the foremost formulations or embodiments of utopia can be seen in its depiction of architectural and urban settings. This also raises the question of how architecture is dealt with in the production of science fiction movies. The aspects of urban space, architecture and cinematic space are highly intertwined and create their own discourse on spatial techniques and scopes. This also allows to look at society as a cybernetic system, influencing the human being as part of the architectural construct, affected by its constellations.

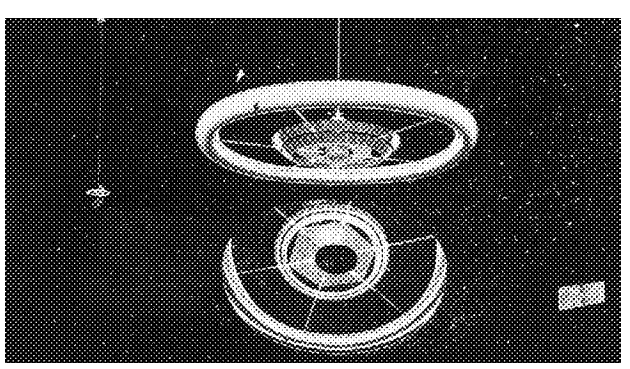
Screenshot Elysium, Neill Blomkamp, 2013, TriStar Pictures. A view of the approach to the space station, showing the entire wheel construction in Earth orbit.

It is important to mention that in science fiction a utopian concept is often expressed by depicting the dystopian, with the implication that the utopian idea as the visionary goal will be reached, when dystopia is overcome. The term utopia and dystopia will therefore almost be used synonymously.

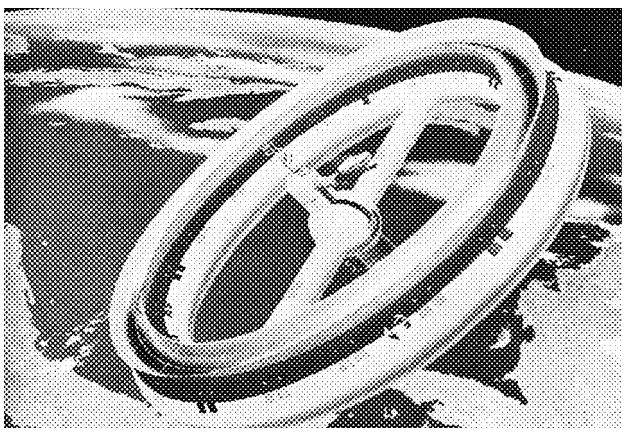
As one of the most prominent examples for the intense correlation between architectural reality, and architectural theory as a background, and cinematic space, Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927, see figure 1) shows a set design and the “wonder city of the future”, as narrational element. The city in Metropolis is presented as a model and as an intertwined system, where it functions as a machine in which everyone and everything is part of the system. Their actions are controlled and the city’s functionality is based on the interplay of every element, human and machine.

The technology ruling and controlling the city is visible in the infrastructure and building material of the city and the organisation of its people. The city as a machine is a symbol for the constraints and inner workings of the society depicted. This new Babylon visualises the narration in architecture, movement and music, whilst telling a classical story of a divided society. Everything supports the existence of the proverbial 1% of society, represented locally in the upper city (where the rich live), in contrast to the sublevel of the city (where the workers live and the machinic workings are situated). So the dystopian setting with the oppression of workers and a prevalent machinery is feeding into the utopian setting of an upper class society. Dystopia supports utopia, makes it possible and palpable.

Oriented on styles and icons of the architecture of their times,



Exterior view of a Stanford Torus, NASA concept, including the non-rotating solar main mirror that casts sunlight onto the populated outer ring. Drawing by Donald E. Davis, ca. 1975. https://space.nss.org/stanford-torus-space-settlement/, last accessed on 10.10.2019



Drawing by Chesley Bonestell, condensing different concepts of space stations in detailed sequences for Collier's Magazine in the 50ies. He was also doing background space art for the movie industry, and was inspired by von Braun's ideas. Colliers Magazine, 1952, https://www.centauri-dreams.org/2012/10/02/colliers-gorgeous-art-breathtaking-ideas/, last accessed on 10.10.2019

movies and their imagery of utopian-dystopian future cities in a way established a foundation for later film productions and designs of in this case megalomaniac proportions and phenomena. And on the other hand feed into the narratives transporting further on of utopia and its depictions.

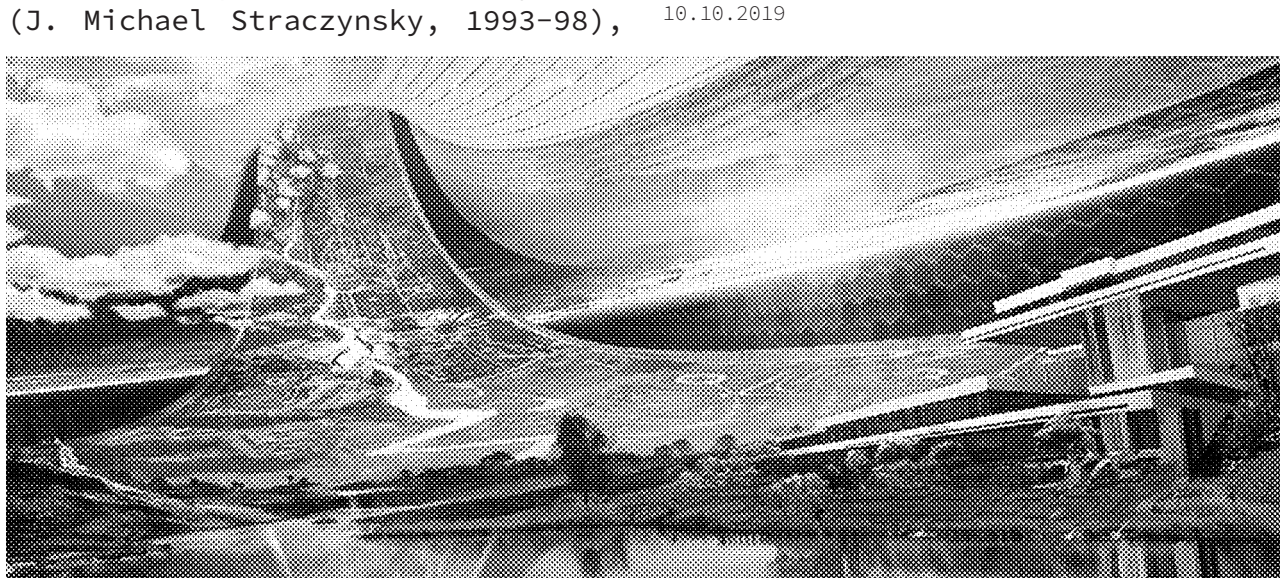
The second and rather current example, Elysium (2013) is connected with the poetics of the US film industry but also stemming from other cultural influences. Several aspects in Elysium (director Neill Blomkamp) show that science fiction can be used as a utopian tool, through its representations of architecture; thus making it a useful example here. The premise of the narration contains aspects of utopia as a segregated space, as contained space, as something neither entirely accessible nor for everyone. All of these aspects are often connected with how utopia is described. Furthermore the architectural space described in Elysium is a metaphor for the structure of society and the different classifications of society. One in space, which is situated high above the constraints of Earth and accessible to only a few and privileged in a gated space community (see Figure 2). The other is one huge never-ending city consisting of conglomerations of huts and favelas, with minimal infrastructure, poverty, decay, extreme working conditions and no health system. In this contrasting visualisation of society the architecture of Elysium, the space station in orbit, sticks out as an exemplary architectural construction, as a superlative in contrast to the sprawl on Earth. The huge luxury habitat as a floating space-home for half a million ultra-affluent citizens references the architecture of space station studies conducted by NASA in the summer study program at Stanford University in 1975; one of which is the design study known as 'Island Two', which would comfortably house 10,000 people (see Figure 3). Technical parameters of the construction include a wheel, 3 kilometres wide and 60 kilometres circumference, with an active air pressure system maintaining a recyclable atmosphere. For the stabilization of the rotating wheel a large mass of water ballast is used and the rotation itself generates a simulated gravity. Slight changes of the original study are the 'open roof' access of the inner wheel construction as to allow access for shuttles from outside (see Figure 4). Further influence was taken from the original drafts of Herman Potočnic (space visionary, 1894-1929) using one part of his concept known as 'The Wohnrad', the residential wheel (1929) and also of the wheel-structured space settlements envisioned by Wernher von Braun (and the Association for Space Navigation) in 1952 (see Figure 5). It should be mentioned that these drafts and imaginations of settlements in space switched several times back and forth between science fiction proposals and illustrations on one hand, and scientific studies and their discussions in technological contexts on the other; be they valid, visionary, feasible or not.

The concept of space stations is neither novel nor exclusively explored in science fiction context. As the concept of the habitat in Elysium is based on one of the hypothetical scientific studies made by NASA in the seventies, space stations in science fiction often use both existing and speculative technologies, fictitious and speculative buildings or urbanities, adapting them to the premises necessary for their narrations. The most viable options of space stations describe the concept of the rotating space wheel or equivalent constructions like rings and comets which enable the generation of an artificial gravity. Some examples and their science fictional visualizations are the Stanford Torus Design (1975) and other torus constructions as seen in the Ringworld (David Niven, 1970) or in Halo (1st-person-shooter, Sci-Fi game franchise, since 2001), cylinder constructions or the O'Neill Cylinder like in Mass Effect (Action RPG, The Citadel, ca. 2013), the Bernal Sphere like in Babylon 5 (J. Michael Straczynsky, 1993-98), the Dyson Sphere (after the original idea of Freeman Dyson, 1959) as in Star Trek: Enterprise (TNG 1992), gyroscopic systems, an Alderson disk, and so on.

Elysium's director Neill Blomkamp uses an obvious iconic imagery and known visionary ideas as a credible and easily accessible premise. He turns it into a critique of current global problems, extrapolating them into a near future. The architectural construct in moon-orbit functions as the metaphor for the class disparities already existent. The luxurious world ring and its technology are used as an overdrawn projection of the current problems of world society. Evoking the celestial city and an enclosed garden of paradise, the near-Earth settlement and (with it the idealisation of) colonisation in space within Elysium, is set as stark contrast to the all-encompassing never-ending slum-city on Earth. The utopian place clashes with the dystopian extrapolation of contemporary socio-economic tendencies. The architectural setting provides a simple yet easily discernible metaphor for this clash.

Worldbuilding in contemporary science fiction is often implementing technological drafts of different eras without further reflection or scrutiny, resulting in adopting a certain mindset of blind faith in technological progress. Working with an imagery of eras in which there was a greater interest in technological feasibility, without asking for social and ecological consequences. In the example of Elysium, Blomkamp plays with these notions and relates them to actual social and economic settings. He uses the juxtaposition of reactionary imagery of the technologically advanced versus the dystopian display of an industrialized and exploited society in a critical and reflective manner.

Drawing by Syd Mead, since the 1970ies active as a production and VFX designer, here a concept drawing for the movie Elysium, 2013. A peak inside the space station depicting the Stanford-Torus Design, expanding it with the artificial atmosphere of a Bevery Hills-like design. https://borg.com/2013/08/23/elysium-the-art-of-the-film-spotlights-work-of-weta-creators/, last accessed on 10.10.2019



From other places to utopian cities

Somayyeh Shahhoseyni

Utopia is a complex notion. It is an ideal place where the human's desires will be realized and where there is no inertia or repetition. This article explores Michel Foucault's approach to describe utopia in which he used the term "heterotopia"[1]. If the utopia is an idealistic and imaginary place, heterotopia is a physical representation or approximation of utopia. A parallel place that interrupts the normal, seemingly mundane continuity of everyday life, bringing together two incompatible situations in one place. This is a place different from other places and terminologically means "other place". In explaining the characteristics of heterotopia, Foucault employs the metaphor of a mirror. A mirror is a utopia because the reflected image is a placeless place, an unreal virtual place that allows one to see one's own visibility. However, the mirror is also a heterotopia, for that it is a real object. The heterotopia of the mirror is at once absolutely real, relating with the real space surrounding it, and absolutely unreal, creating a virtual image.

Foucault described heterotopias as temporal. In each era in history, there have been different heterotopias in different cultures. In recent centuries, fast-growing technology and metropolitan expansions yielded new kinds of heterotopias to emerge inside the cities. The cities and their inhabitants witnessed new problems caused by environmental and housing policies. This article argues that such problems are the results of modern human understanding of place and space. As today's architecture and urban planning are the results of the implementation of such perspective to the technological instruments.

To understand it better we need to return to the concept of the place which is an old term and usually comes alongside the space. Plato argues the space as a determined and eternal being that the things are located in it. Aristotle, on the other hand, defines space as "topos" or place and considers it a component of the larger space whose range corresponds to the volume embraces that place. Plato's definition of space received more attention in the course of history and became completed by the Newtonian definition of space and place during the Renaissance and shaped the concept of the three-dimensional absolute space which is temporal, and physical masses are emplaced within it.

Newton and later Kant and Hume considered space as three-dimensional with length, width and height, and place as the geometric coordination of a point with respect to that space. Modern science and technology suppose that space is an infinite grid, describing it with Euclidean geometry and the Cartesian coordinate system. By such a definition, space is reduced to three material dimensions and loses its other qualities; and the complex relationships in the world are defined in the form of mathematical relations. It means studying the world in an isolated environment. Isolated from qualitative and humanistic aspects. The result will be the production of abstract, simplified, standardized, concrete and binary spaces which have been designed so homogenous in that there are no preferences for the points. Man, with all his complexities is expected to live in an abstract simplified space represent on a paper. This may be applicable for an abstract entity but a plan which is constrained into two or three material dimensions is not sufficient to meet all needs of a natural being.

Abstraction helps human beings in translating and understanding the world complex notions. Numbers, poetry, painting, mathematics, and so on are all the courses of simplifying such notions. But can a house also be explained by numbers or by its latitude and longitude? It is the same weird as to charge a robot's power with parental love and empathy. The inconsistency and incompatibility between humans and their living spaces have shaped the heterotopias of the modern age. Individuals have had to adapt themselves to these abstract spaces of planned cities with the divisions often based on political and economic decisions. David Harvey sees the housing policies as the result of capital accumulation transforming from its liquid to concrete form that causes mass alienation of the whole population from qualities of daily life in the urban environment and from their capacity to revolve[2].

Martin Heidegger, Gaston Bachelard, Henri Lefebvre, Jeff Malpas, Norberg Schultz, and Marshall Berman, challenged the space and place interpretations as to be still, non-dialectical and inert. Henri Lefebvre criticizes modern urban planning and argues that planners attempt to map space dividing and problem-solving through simplifying calculations and thus fail to grasp the whole complex concept of the human spatiality[3]. He describes planned societies as a result of technology and modernity. The result of instruments, and the result of production as a repetitive action. On the other hand, from the view of a modernist architect or planner like Le Corbusier, it is the result of considering the human as a recurring existence with a set of psycho-physical axioms that can be listed and defined by elites. Today, analogous cities and residential complexes are built all over the world. Technological instruments help humans overcome climate conditions, flatten the hills, heap the valleys, warm up the cold air and cool the warm air. And modernity, devoid of any culture or custom, makes cities deprived of cultural, ethnic, and traditional elements.

The individuals, each one now as one of the billions who cannot be identified from the rest, have to build a personality of their own self. They have to be followers of the new norms of human colonies, and as a civilized human being they must perform an acceptable steady role by wearing the social masks which are not for special occasions or rituals anymore, but are now part of a daily routine manifested in non-places of everyday life.

In such circumstances, the concept of self-reflection has also changed. As in social mirror theory, people are not able to perceive their own reflection without having other people's interpretations of their own experiences. Here the reflection is that of the social scale; self-cognition is rooted in social feedbacks. But the reflection of modern human is not a reflection of his real self. This causes profound feeling of self-alienation and lack of identity.

In this situation, those who are tired of their fabricated personalities seek to shelter in heterotopias where they can, even temporarily, withdraw their social masks. Indeed,

1 Foucault, Michel, and Jay Miskowiec. "Of other spaces." diacritics 16.1 (1986): 22-27.

2 Harvey, David. Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution. Verso books, 2012.

3 Lefebvre, Henri, and Donald Nicholson-Smith. The production of space. Vol. 142. Blackwell: Oxford, 1991.

heterotopias are places emplaced among many other places. Outside these places, individuals demonstrate another image of themselves which is not in accordance with the common norms of each society. In these places, they don't struggle anymore to achieve the common definition of acceptable individuals or successful persons in that society.

If heterotopia is an approximation of imaginary utopia in the real world, then to realize utopia it makes sense if we try to extend these individual other places to all places. To do so, we need to change our understanding of place and space and subsequently of our built environment. Since utopia is a place where desire matters, then humans should be regarded as independent rather than recurring beings. And since the identity manifests itself in place, and not in non-place, the existence of place and an independent human being is intertwined. In this phenomenological approach to human-space relation, the solutions will be obviously qualitative solutions.

REALITY-HYBRIDS AND UTOPIAN SPACES

Tobias Biseke

Reality-Hybrids: An immersion between reality and fictionally generated worlds.

The term 'hybrids of reality' describes the synthesis of different accesses of reality (in general physical and a constructed), which is pieced together as one construct of reality. The result from this (technical) constructed image of reality generates the connexion of the organic sensory of the human and a technical sensory.

There are three components to the term 'hybrid of reality': the real surrounding (physical reality), the recipient and a medial abstraction of the place in a technical produced context (medial reality) or in a natural context (nature medium). Because of the hybridisation of the physical and a constructed medial reality a mixed reality is created by the recipient or a so called connexion which is evolved through the oscillation of the sensory perception of both possibilities of reception. The immersive effect generates another medial plateau. The term 'submersion', which helps to define the word 'immersion', is particularly connected to 3D-CAD. Hence, only if there is doubt regarding the perceived reality, this doubt has to be neutralised with the help of the submersion into an illusion (through indifference). Therefore, the hybrid of reality can only be generated with the effect of immersion because the illusion of the medial level of reality must be overcome. Consequently, the presence of medial ancillary information must support the physical surrounding. Similarly, Oswald Wiener describes: "The adapter places - viewed from 'outside' - between the inadequate cosmos and the unsatisfied people. He hermetically excludes him from the conventional surroundings, and only in the first stadium of adaptation does he go back to his own saved information and for that of his own content"[1]. The hybrid of reality is never only an effect created by the brain between the threshold of reality and medial reality, it is rather something intelligible which results from the hermeneutic reading of a subject. It must be communicated in order to generate reality.

Here some examples for processes to build a Reality-Hybrid:

1. Example: Reality-Hybrids as a natural phenomenon

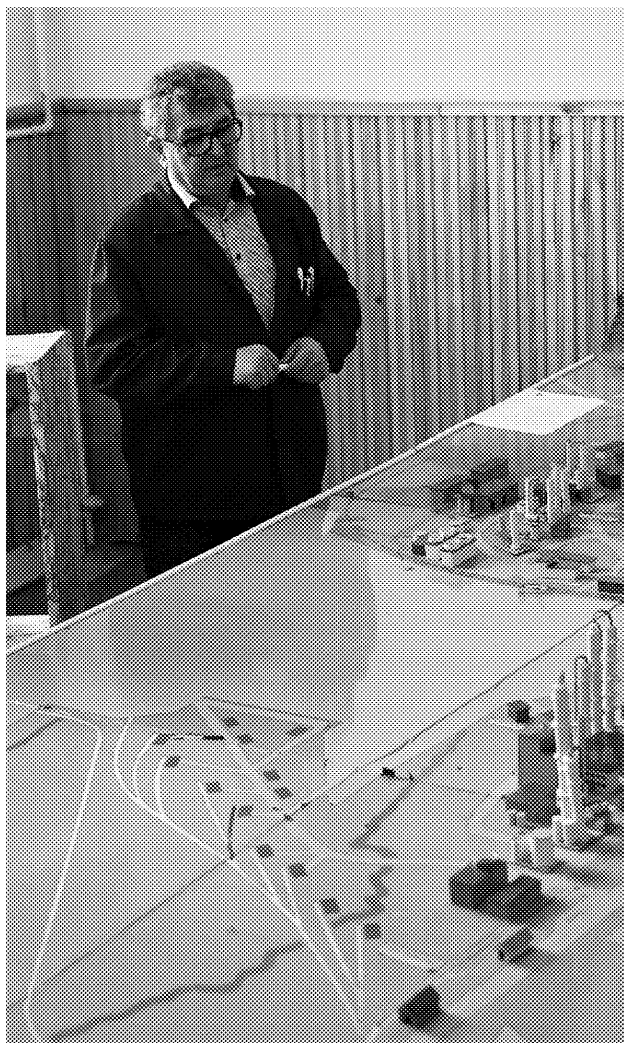
The Hohlstein or 'Kammerbacher-Höhle' (a Cave) on the foot of the hill Meißner (in northern Hessen) was first mentioned in 1267 and shows human activity originating from 200 B.C. The Meißner, which is also called 'Switzerland of Hessen', used to be a destination or pilgrimage for reformative freethinkers like Walter Benjamin or Gusto Gräser. Many pagan myths and fairy tales involve the Hohlstein, for example the fairy

1 „Der Bio-Adapter" Oswald Wiener / Die Verbesserung von Mitteleuropa.

tale Frau Holle[2]. In these fairy tales there is a well, which functions as gate into a different world. In the Kammerbacher Hohlstein there is a stretch of standing water which generates a visual effect. Inside the cave there is a part which looks like a moral story. The ground of the lake consists of bright sand-stone like rocks and the ceiling is rather black with a raw structure. Humans threw branches into the lake which would lead to optic rhizome structures. Illuminating the ground of the lake with a torch, one could see rocks at the bottom of the lake; illuminating the ceiling of the cave, one could see the reflection of the ceiling on the surface of the water. But if one illuminates the peak of the parable, where the ground of the lake and the ceiling meet, an illusory mixed picture of ground and ceiling was created. This is only the reflection of both on the surface of the water[3]. With reference to the cave and the many pagan legend and myths, which represent a gate into paradise or hell, it can be said that those hybrid effects trigger the anthroposophical sense for myths and the desire to make sense of circumstances.

2. Example: Reality-Hybrid as a phantasmagorical room installations

The phantasmagorical room installations of the 19th and 20th centuries are analogous to the construction of the hybrids of reality, particularly in regards to the visual effects and construction of these. Etienne-Gaspard Robertson[4] (1831-1833) shows that immersive room installations correspond with Hybrid-Reality in the sense that those are cognitively confused with reality. This is pointed out by the projection of a skeleton onto artificial fog in a dark room (cave or darkened hall) which seems to move because of the changing of the depth of the picture. These black and white ghost-like images of illusions, that are created because of transitioned frames, can only be created in a totally darkened room and are projected with an additive projection method on the particle fog. These phantasmagories, in which pictures of dead people were used, can lead to an indifference of medium and reality. The immersive effect is created with the help of the homogenisation of the surrounding area). In this case medial projections are projected frameless into the real room, in contrast,



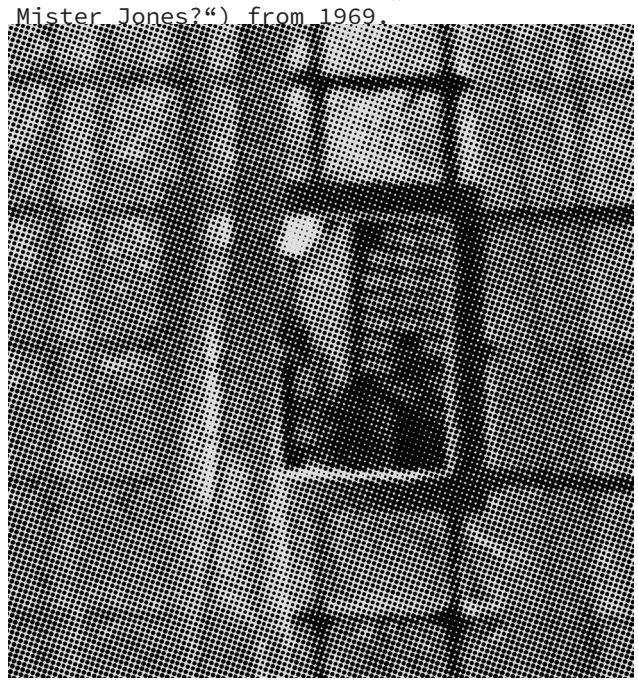
HMD (Head-Mounted-Display) isolates the surrounding (with the help of a mask) and the visual field is filled with images, which leads to a full immersion. The room installation is, therefore, collective perception event. The effect process by Pepper's Ghost, which was named after John Henry Pepper and was created by Henry Dircks, is another phantasmagory, which can be used as another analogy to the hybrid of reality. The projections onto a really body are made, which together create a picture (medial picture and reality picture). This effect depends on a frameless projection and a darkened room. This is used especially in ghost trains or in theatres or mistakenly sold as a hologram. Noam M. Elcott[5] explains that phantasmagories are the technical preliminary stage of the Windows HoloLens or in general the AR, which is tested today in many ways. Today the car industry is using this technique for the so-called 'Head-up-Displays'. So, the recipient and members of the performance have an indifference between the medial reality and the technical reality; they cannot exactly separate between media- and reality pictures. That is the reason why media pictures become more realistic. Reality is not created by the body-sensory or perception, rather it would be generated by brain imaging where it generates a connection between the confusing reality pictures.

3. Example: Reality Hybrid in a VR Installation.

In the VR-Installation 'Do you exist Miss Q?'[6] is a full computer generated (FullCG) room installation in the virtual reality. It based on a story of Stanislaw Lem from the book Darkness and Mold[7] from the short story Do you exist Mr. Jones?. In this virtual reality are two worlds; the inner world of the protagonist and a trial where the judge Mr. Jones and the lawyer Mr. Tenner try to find out who is the owner of Miss Q´s ghost and body. Miss Q had a car accident and the IBMC corporation restored her body with protheses. After a few years Miss Q is made from 98% protheses and only the right side of her brain is her own. Miss Q has never paid for the protheses and now the company wants to change the right brain into a prosthetic brain, too, and transfer the mathematical soul of Miss Q to the other side. They want to create a new business idea to make humans immortal. However, Miss Q defends her position so eloquently that IBMC want to take the right of her own speech, because this it is the result of the technical right brain side. Now the question is: Does Miss Q 'exist'?.

4. Example: Reality-Hybrids in the utopian city Victoria.

The journey to Victoria in Romania is similar to a real model of a Reality-Hybrid. It is a city in which more than one mode of reality exists. These modes of reality exist not only between technical artefacts and human beings, but also between ideologies, like the past socialism and today's capitalism, as well as religion and human beings. That is how the ideological parts diffundate between different modes of reality. The ideological virtuality of socialism originates in the post-real space which reality transforms into an existing utopia (which can be seen in the miniature-like structure of the city).



2 Fairy Tail „Frau Holle" Grimm Index of Child and House Fairytales 24 (KHM 24).

3 Compare with Video https://youtu.be/e63rlJZd7r8.

4 Compare „Das phantasmagorische Dispositiv", from Noam M. Elcott. https://www.nachdemfilm.de/issues/text/das-phantasmagorische-dispositiv.

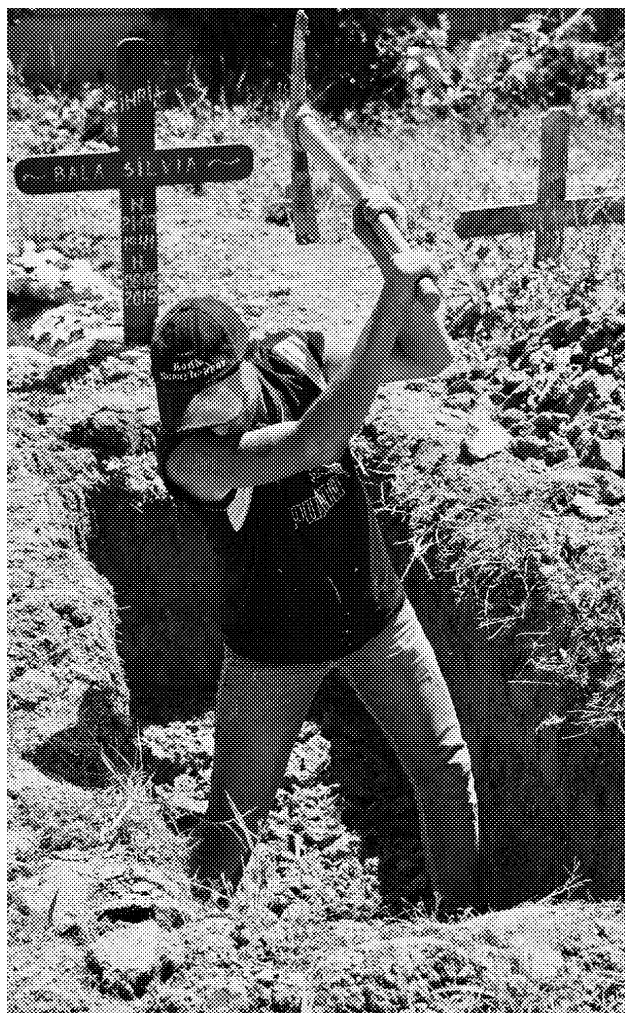
5 Idem.

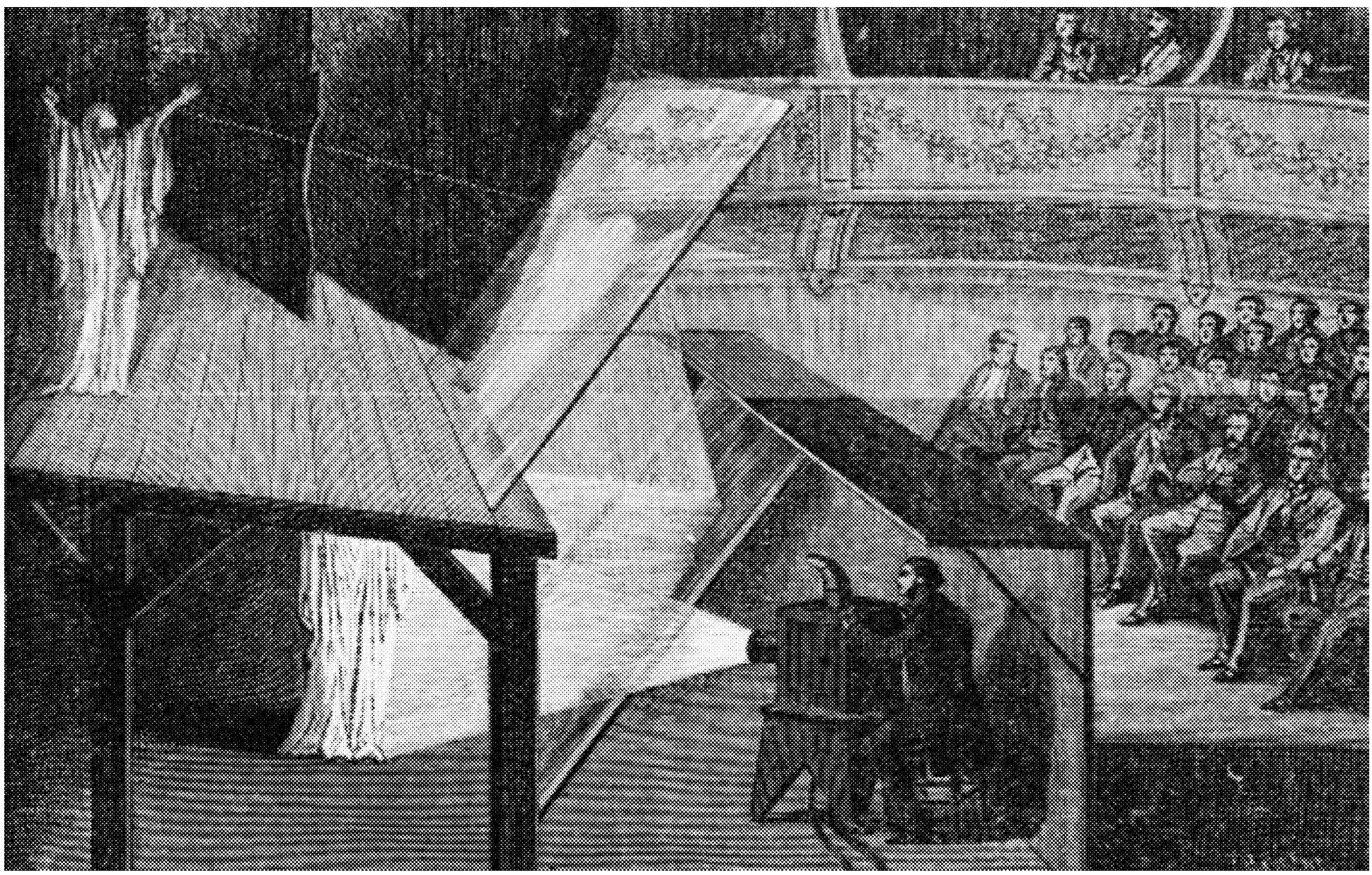
6 Trailer: https://youtu.be/oSOa27t1O-vo

7 Compare Opowiadania (engl. „Darkness and Mold" the short story „Do you exist Mister Jones?") from 1969.

The disturbed relation between those ideologies is underlined by the angel bust in a painting hanging in the Victoria Hotel which was covered by a black marker. That is how Christian symbols were made a taboo subject in the home country of the vampires. In the chemical company called Viroment, located near the Caparthian Mountains, different modes of reality exist as well. It used to be an ammunition company founded by the Nazis which was used by the Soviets and it lastly became a semi-official American fabric for ammunition up until today. The company's logo 'V' could stand for Viroment, virtual, Vlad, vampire, victory or Victoria. The letter has a shadow behind it which seems to be a long shadow of an ideological dream of an unsuccessful victory. In fact, the local population is not influenced by this development. Rather, they accept it because they were once suffering from extreme foreign control. That is how a gravedigger explained it growing up as an orphan in Victoria. He offered a few members of the summer camp to walk them around the valleys, meadows and rivers on a mountain to show where Ceaușescu plied his dreadful trade in his childhood. In between gestures and Romanian words like murderer, military and Ceaușescu's villa he gave the listeners an idea of what had happened in the past. On top of the treeless mountain the visitors could notice a field of solar panels (picture 15) in the distance. With the help of waterworks and the solar panels the city is autarkical and independent from other parts of infrastructure. Similar to the virtual space (everything is bodyless) the city seems unapproachable, somewhat exemplary, somewhat imaginary (picture 13). The city seems to be an artificial place synthesized by modes of reality of different ideologies. Today capitalism has arrived and will set a new footprint into the city Victoria.

All together the term reality in Reality-Hybrids is only an elusive possibility of perception, which strengthens the meaning of the term virtuality in itself. To further explain the term 'reality' the radical as well as the cognitive constructivism is used. These can be applied to the construction of reality and the learning behaviour of the recipients. Looking at cognitive constructivism, the isolated and individual view of reality and different mechanism is possible. Von Glaserfeld refers to the overcoming of threshold of deception and delusion (vice versa) and the connected term 're-presentation', which was coined by von Glaserfeld, to cognitively construct experiences already made in a new way. This process can be understood as the active acquisition of knowledge with the help of an active, constructive process of repetition, which is part of the individual construction of reality. These processes are the peak of the communicative process of perception, which can be discussed as a detailed reflection of these processes. Two conclusions can be drawn: Firstly, the cognitive constructed reality by the individual, which happens within the recipient himself (individual reality). Secondly, the technical constructed offer of the reception in a staged, illusive reality, which is connected to the cybernetic simulation of reality (fictionally reality).





Situated Drama
Friedrich Kirschner

~~Welcome to Etherbox!~~ **(Notes taken from Victoria's Summer Camp Lecture)**
~~This pad text is synchronized as you type, so that everyone viewing this page sees the same text. Add __NOPUBLISH__ to prevent this pad from being archived.~~
Friedrich Kirschner "Situated drama aka enacting complexities"

FK - professor of new media and technologies, University of Performing Arts Berlin
---
apologies - missing credits, using mac...
didn't used a mac since a long time

The talk - about academic lenses inspired by humanities methods, such as ethnographic studies, social studies applied to the artistic practise

Coming from art school
where everything is governed by certain principles > autonomy for students

Research based art / different from art space (galleries? / museums?) research
I don't see the benefits by bringing two things together.
I don't see the benefits by bringing art space discourses within the academic research discourse.
(Comment: pffff!!!)

Lens implemented : own field of the world - complex
World is very complex (Donna Haraway - everything is connected with others)
Reference to Tincuta's talk
: cybernetics is an influence in his field of study, but does quite the opposite;
Interested in using these models, but cannot accept this crude representations / models of the world;
All life experience is counter cybernetics;
To counter feedback loops simplify representation ; rationalisation of the world.

""posttraditionale Vergemeinschaftung"" <- can be approximative translated as "post - traditional communiti z ation"
Used to be a structure - you can be part or against it;
But structures will always be there;
Like churches, for example;
Or the way you dress…..
Reference to ? > kittler ? not sure / dramatology

Identity is fluid, situated
Negotiation
Situated laws / behaviours
Formation of new situations

-> imagine actions changing situations or forming a new situation

Interactionism, field of sociology

How can we make art, in the world we live in ?

----- **Another preambule**
Question: how many people went to a German theater play?
Were you forced to go there?
Were you interested by yourself?

Own history: moved from the USA in the most Eastern German University to teach Digital media
Eastern German universities - in line with German theatre tradition,
Theater shaped by the idea of Bertold Brecht
"you shall always remember that a play is put on"
Don't be emotional, because it's a play
Don't be funny at the same time
The school is shaped by this post-traditional philosophy
The play has 2 roles : the role on the script and the one you do yourself by working on the role
Another rule: just obey to the director's idea

Then started a PhD
Born 2 hours from here
Know quite a lot about communism
Many ways to talk on something, different realities
Always negotiations between opposed reality
Navigating complex situations

***** name missing *** female version of Bruno Latour (teaching sociology in Chicago)**
Negotiation should include also objects and others than humans
We are shaped by knowledge objects,
Always situated and situative

-- Photo of a German theater --
German theater would look like in the photo

------ **switch to Quicktime video**
Quick trailer - sound off :
https://vimeo.com/137982330
Giant robots conference in Brisbane (Australia).
A device, a machine called "Weltmaschine" (German engineering untranslatable, but it would be the "World machine" so so)

Concrete block

Presented as the only thing that can travel through time
Kinect+cables+box->lookin' professional

Generate specific features / based on people 's expectations

Specultative - psychological …..
Used qualitative form of sociology
Semi structured questionnaire to ask robots questions ("garbage bot")
Human robot - speed dating
Also a questionnaire with questions on robots:

- Where do you think there will be a robot in your house?
- How much power will you have in the future?
- Draw cats -- the more cats you draw the more power you have…

(dalek) <----- ???

Playful agency
Grounded theory
As craziest questionaries as possible

 # society for cultural optimism
Similar to forum theatre (Augusto Boal - theatre of the oppressed -70s)

-- Screenshot images of telegram messages +his brother --
<-- he makes an auto-ethnographic study of this chat
Conversation about mechanical keyboard
Conversation drives him nuts
Languages switches
How to give this as a score for theater students?
Very boring if not in mechanical keyboard
Forum of mechanical keyboards geek ? at geekhack "keyboard enthusiasts"

<-- what a group buys?
When one searches for stuff produced long ago
Forums help to organise efforts to produce mech keyboards in china
groupbuy.com
You can produce anything you want

if you get enough people to want it
Institutionalized starting from a discussion on a forum > becoming an economical model
Hack the production lines !!! small scale quantities productions integrated into a mass production system !

= connected to video games because vg needs mech keyboards
Steam store largest place to buy videogames
*** gamer talk ***
Steamstore has a break, because of summer sales * store.steampowered.com
Usually when big sales, there is a game
Butterfly effect ?
Former minister of finance in Greece - Yannis Varoufakis has a PhD in Game Theory:)
Worked at steam (wow)

Internet meme : ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY ... HELDENREISE ...

-- return of theatre image
Loop : hard to work in theater because theater is like this (conventional scene/room)

Model of theater does not make sense anymore
What if we create cultural product that don't make sense anymore (?)
Back internet meme : ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY ... HELDENREISE ...

American entertainment giant elephant in the room
Does not want to sound like an attorney ("avocat du diable")

Meme image = crossroad rod panel, one way to **storytelling**, another way to **complexity**

Western culture myth of a story with only one ending
[disclaimer] Call of duty, horrible game (part of it recruit people by US Army singular narratives are mainstream->problem

Theater is a good place for new cultural productions
And negotiate with different people
Space for ... cooking ?
Space for crazy things
People are not upset if someone beats one another on stage
Not calling the police
Cultural setting with bizarre things happening
No consequences like in real life because is theatre -> ok with crazy things happening -> Get people to make people do crazy shit
Make-believe has become harder

"Make Believe"
example from «the social practical» project kind a like Minecraft blocks
Phone squares, is a social particle
Science to inspect a social particle to someone
One can change social particles
Charge social particles and throw them at others *experiment* <- throw stuff at Tincuta and she smiles
2500 social practices
Social gravity
500 social particles people will be attracted to them
Attracts people = they will jump at it!
Also built a «social particle accelerator» (performative installation)
New ways to look at the social thing, through this (uncanny) setting

Not a theatre setting

-- video now of battle royale - (
Battle Royale Documentation at Next Level Festival (Dortmund, Germany) 2016: https://vimeo.com/162536324)
Social simulation
80 people
Societies
10 workers pressing buttons=>generating products
5 politicians use gross domestic product
Divided in two societies
-- utopia written on the wall

Representation of the society, invited to move, from country to country to suck out more and more resources from the lands
Archigram late sixties
The idea of walking city, inspired by cybernetics
Gloves, touch the performer to move society
Workers have to generate enough energy to move the society
Workers are paid, they go to the bar, etc.
No actors, just players(the audience)
No description of what a "worker" is, they were only tools given (soldering iron, cardboard...)
You have a role but you can do anything you want => people negotiate how they want to perform self chosen tasks
Rare moment worker + culture
Open a way for people to negotiate between themselves
How they want to perform their role
Culture people decided to become porn industry

Things happen
Revolution happened with power dynamics
Riot of workers to the politicians tent
Some rioters decided to stay in the political tent to participate to the political set

<----- much happened like in reality, did he hear as a feedback...

// social psycho experiments but to train to extract from systems authority

Discussion on what it's like to be a worker?
Automated worker Arduino plus servo motor
For sale of this automated worker the creator got paid 3 coins, one shift's worth, was upset
What does it mean to automatize your work? Bring people to negotiate!
This is awesome!
He "makes believe" it was huh :) but yeah that is truly is funky

[[**video of students work with sound**]] **:** (All Together Now - Documentation of first year Research projects MA Spiel und Objekt: https://vimeo.com/340237179)

Description :
Audience invited to give food and art to animals
Then to ask forgiveness for Anthropocene
Anna Vera Kelle & Leoni, shape and negotiate as agents
("Schule" "Press" desks)
Resources are transferred to next generations of players
A 5 channel installation
By plugging in and out
Material mediated knowledge object (charged)
Actualizing our understanding of Mediterranean crisis of refugees !

www.spielundobjekt.de

****

Question: architect - Stefan Farâmiță
How would the work of the last video would be put in an architectural design context ?
Answer: by stepping away from academia logic, towards what humans are in reality, using playing
I believe : when people can lie then they can be truthful to themselves, can try things
Architects can be the best at playing citizens unhappy with architects
His talk highlights that :
Not one single thing happen emmerged, but many things, chaotic, many ideas
Very idea will be good and bad
Like a pharmakon / poison or medicament
Its about negotiations, not outcome.
- cool answer

Question: How are the roles assigned? Randomly ? Fictional ?
Start form 0? Is there a set of instructions?
Does it have to do something with my current situation?
Answer: importance for him that people have “some sort of choice”
People need a choice.
Persuasion, ask questions to change perception
Who wants to have a normal life? Instead of who wants to be a worker?

****

questions

That’s why its theater not science!
The play aspect is most important <3
[disclaimer] we are not therapists
Playfulness of the situation is established

Question:
Latour, human and non-humans, assemblages
Methods of controverse:
1. Do you use controverse?
2. (reading) about negotiation, harmonies, resonance, Hartmund Rosa -> also used ?
Answer:
Resonance would be interesting to apply to this work yes, thinking about it
Latour... yes and no, love and hate, (Comment: What, Stengers !)
Find people with various backgrounds,
Reference : Karin Knorr Cetina

(comment: Super nice way to give a reference!)

Question (Tincuta): Do you collect those situated situations?
Answer: Amazing question, ask the students
A story about rumours in a theater play. Uh.. Uh
65 persons decides of a setting in a bar, but 3 are not part, have to understand after how Things are set

END

****

People argue
Things are so complex to not been able to be documented
But there’s a press core...

Question: Milgram experiment? Old psychological situation to improve authority
Answer: There is a tape on Milgram instruction on how to play
Yes, there is a link
Definitely.
Do we do it reverse? or do we do the same?
Situation change, situations not reproducible
Therefore non reproducible data were obtained
Latour makes the analogy of science as theater setting

Question: not a question / but a comment
There are no borders, reality play, more than stage play
How important is the real time?
Answer: I want to have one-two beers with you <3
We know who to ask for a 3 beer
turn- beer- based
Importance of rythm
Brechtian
Machinex? immersive theater when they have a bar, talk to the audience as friends
Where meta- discussion can happen.

****

Human Computer

RYBN.org (Paris, FR)

Human Computers is a mediarchaeology study of the shared origins of computers and labor division. We have observed the history of the relationships between humans and machines, through the labor perspective. We traced the history of this relationship from the contemporary digital labor regime, back to the very first computing factory. This factory, set in 1793 during the French Revolution by a French engineer, Gaspard Riche de Prony, was inspired by Adam Smith's labor division theory. The automation of calculation was organized as a modern factory, workers being embodied in the chain of calculation. Since then human intelligence is now systematically put to work by machine learning and artificial intelligence processes. This history is not linear, taking multiple paths, multiple roads. We followed different leads, scrutinising all the different stories convoked in the computing history: one of them tells the story of the invisibility of women at work, throughout the parallel history of the human computers and the automation of calculation (Marie Lechner). Another story relates the history of automata, starting with Vaucanson's Digesting Duck (1739) and Von Kempelen's Chess player, the infamous Turc Mecanique (1770), and concluding with Amazon's "Human in the loop" microworking platform Amazon Mturk (2001). A third story follows the history of labor's physiological measurements, a pseudo-science known as Metrics. All stories are linked together, and we can move from one story to an other, by using shortcuts, either historical facts, machine genealogies, or symbolic associations.

The perspective of the human as machine, or the human-engine, literally haunts the whole modern era. Constructed upon a mechanistic and thermodynamic conception of the human body, this vision led to the invention of numerous instruments to optimize productivity by measuring and quantifying human efforts, and to the development of a whole scientific field, labor physiology or metrics. Starting as laboratory experiments, mixing fatigue and efforts quantification, ergonomics, psycho-physiology, hygienism, Metrics entered factories along with the taylorist organization of work, as well as schools, to prepare children to the industrial society. Metrics gave birth to a doctrine of the future models of work management, Fordism and Toyotism, and continued to keep its influence up until the contemporary digital era, in which data metrics and data capture have created new markets, new business models, and in which work and labor tend to be hidden, looping with the history of computing. We tried to index the different inventions, the instruments, the experiments that structured this story, retracing a full genealogy that underlines the vision of the human-machine, as a mechanism, as an engine. The research is an attempt to shed a new light on the digital labor regime. This index takes the form of an historical timeline, classifying techniques by organs, as functions, states of the human body at work, embracing two centuries of mechanistic applications, from Edward Kentish's pulmometer in 1813 to Frank and Lilian Gilbreth's Chronocyclographs in 1915, to conclude in the contemporary era with Amazon's dystopic patents of the ultrasonic bracelet in 2016.

Human Computers is a collaborative research, conducted by RYBN.ORG and Marie Lechner, initiated within the PAMAL - Preservation & Art Media Archaeology Lab, Avignon.

http://www.rybn.org/human_computers/

INTERIOR OF VAUCANSON'S AUTOMATIC DUCK.
A, clockwork; *B*, pump; *C*, mill for grinding grain; *F*, intestinal tube; *J*, bill; *H*, head; *M*, feet.

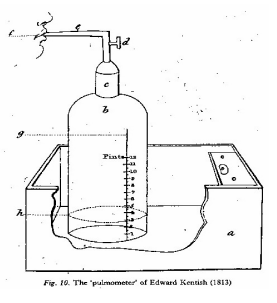
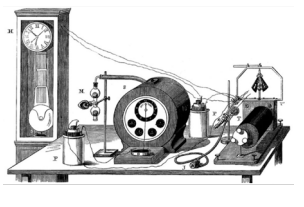
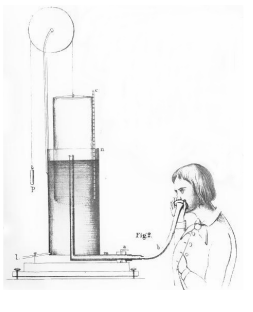
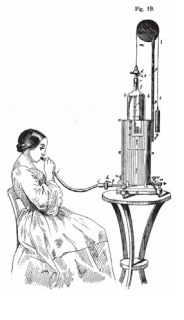


Fig. 10. The "pulmometer" of Edward Kentish (1813)







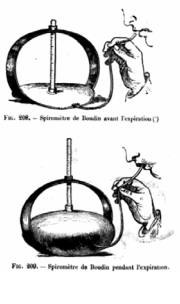


Fig. 208. — Spiromètre de Bondin avant l'expiration ()

Fig. 209. — Spiromètre de Bondin pendant l'expiration.

Annex : index of illustrations

Preamble : Automata, human engine.

1. Digesting duck, Jacques de Vaucanson, 1738
Vaucanson's automatons (which was subsequently appointed inspector of silk factories) were presented at the Sciences Academy in 1738. Ten years later, La Mettrie extends to the human the concept of Descartes' animal machine in "The human machine".
2. Turc Mécanique, Wolfgang von Kempelen, 1770
Human embedded in the machine
3. Publication, "Le moteur humain", Jules Amar, 1913.

I. Lung, metabolism.

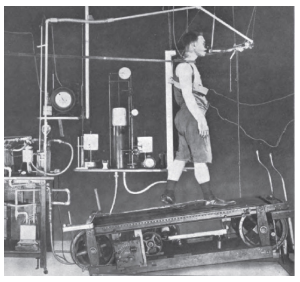
4. Pulmometer, Edward Kentish, 1813
5.6.7.8.9.10. Spirometers, 1846-1963
The first invention of our fresco is the Pulmomètre by Edward Kentish (1813), followed by a long series of Spirometers, used to measure the volume of inspired and exhaled air : John Hutchinson (1846), Alton Wintrich (1854), Boudin (1875), Dagatz-Knipping (1963).
11. Respiration Chamber, Max von Pettenkofer & Carl von Voit, 1866
This device allows to control the absorption of food and the waste emitted within a given period of time.
12. Calorimetric Chamber, Atwater-Rosa-Benedict, 1892-1897
13. Gaz Exchange measurement of a man loaded, Jules Amar
Jules Amar uses a spirometer for his laboratories studies on the smallest energetic consumption for the execution of a simple industrial task involving working tools. (Le Moteur humain, Jules Amar, §62. : "The expenditure of an engine is its energy consumption, either in fuel for inanimate engines or in food for animated engines.")

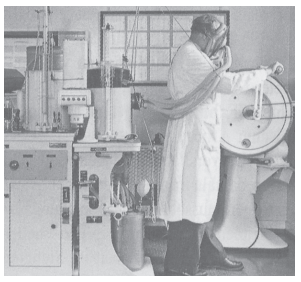
III. Heart.

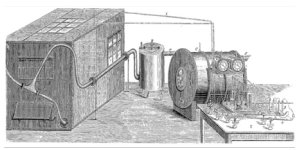
14. Kymograph, Carl Ludwig, 1850
15. 16. Sphygmograph, Etienne-Jules Marey, 1860 (Marey EJ (1885) La Methode Graphique, Paris)
17. Sphygmomanometer, Angelo Mosso, 1883
These instruments measure the variations in arterial pressure.

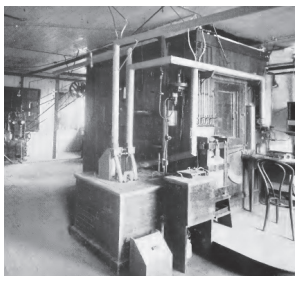
IV. Muscle, fatigue.

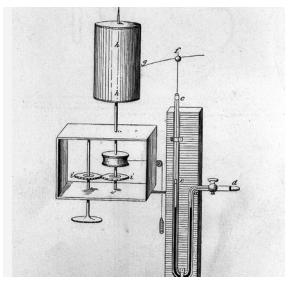
18. Myograph, Etienne-Jules Marey, 1873.
19. Fatigue curves, Angelo Mosso, 1884
20. Publication « La fatica », Angelo Mosso, 1891. He formulates laws pertaining to exhaustion. The productivity problem turns into how to reduce the loss of energy in the conversion of energy into workforce.
21. 22. 23. Ergograph, Angelo Mosso,1884











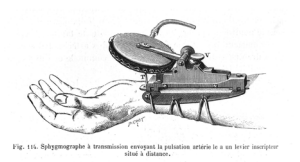
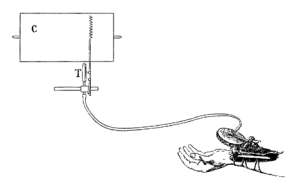
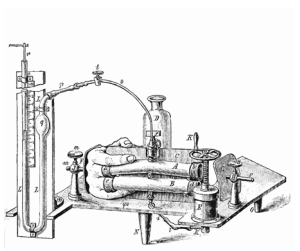


Fig. 114. Sphygmographe à transmission enregistrant la pulsation artérielle à un levier inscripteur situé à distance.





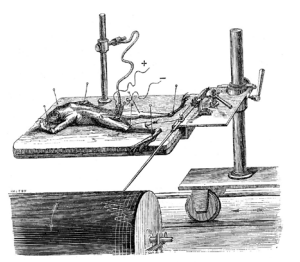
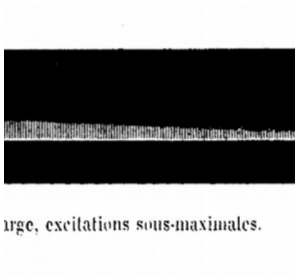
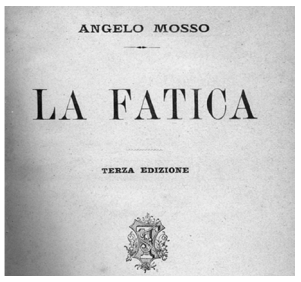
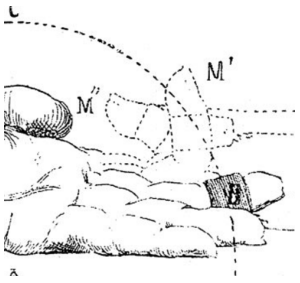


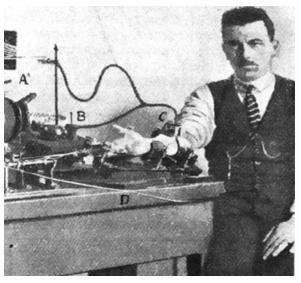
Fig. 3. — Myographe de Marey.

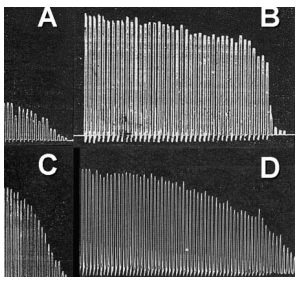


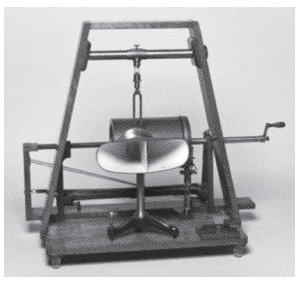
urge, excitations sous-maximales.

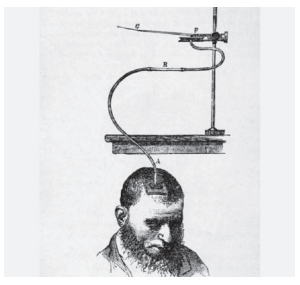


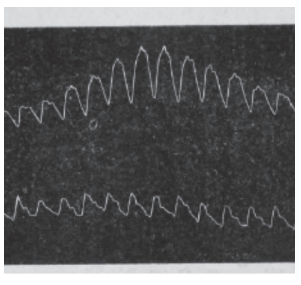










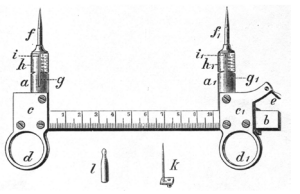


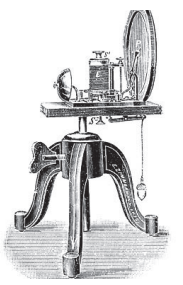
V. Brain.

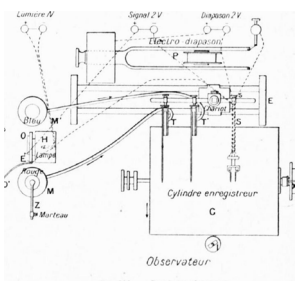
24. Noematachograph, Franciscus Cornelius Donders, 1865. Instrument for measuring simple or complex reaction time, compared to a mental chronometer. 25. 26. Alfred Binet studies mental fatigue through experiments on pupils, conducting Binet to develop a metric scale for the measurement of intelligence designed to identify pupils ill-equipped for learning (1905). 27. Aesthesiometer, Herman Griesbach, 1895 Physiological method of measuring mental effort 28. Audiometer, Emile Kraepelin, 1890 Instrument measuring the attention. Kraepelan invents a system for tracking the students, classified according to their working capacity. Kraepelin's method is based on counting errors during the execution of a mental task. 29. 30. 31. Psychograph, Jules Amar, after 1913 Aims to measure the acuity of senses and attention. 32. 33. Patent. Mturk, Amazon, 2001. Launched publicly in 2005, Mturk initiates a new organization of work totally decentralized and networked, where human intelligence, isolated from the body (and working conditions), is not only measured but extracted to be available to algorithms, and injected into the computational chains of artificial intelligence. 34. 35. 36. Patent. Captcha (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart). This patent presents a version of images based Captcha, owned by Microsoft. Re-Captcha is a service acquired in 2009 by Google, deployed on the internet, and serves google to improve its services of digitization of books, to train form recognition softwares, for various applications, using the available workforce of Internet users.

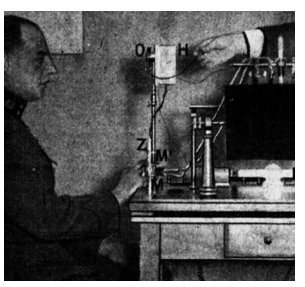
VI. Time management.

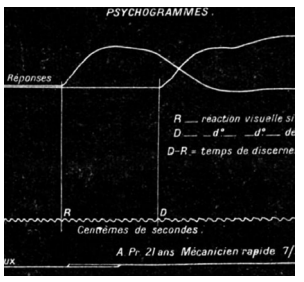
37. Chronophotographs - « movements of the worker in professional work », Charles Frémont, published in 1895 in "le monde moderne" (janv-juin, t1). 38. Chronometer, task timing at the heart of the Taylor method, the first step in organising work based on data capture 39. 40. 41. Chronocyclegraph, Frank & Lilian Gilbreth, 1913 Graphical method is applied to movement. Movement is timed, recorded, and optimized 42. 43. Patent. Ultrasonic bracelet and receiver for detecting position in 2D plane, Amazon, 2017. Designed to "monitor performance relative to tasks assigned to employees from its warehouses, yet already stuffed with cameras and stopwatches" (Lionel Maurel).

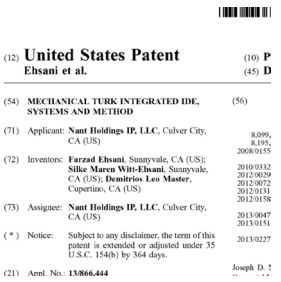












(12) **United States Patent**
Ehsani et al. (10) P (45) D

(54) **MECHANICAL TURK INTEGRATED IDE, SYSTEMS AND METHOD** (56)

(71) Applicant: **Nant Holdings IP, LLC**, Culver City, CA (US)

(72) Inventors: **Farzad Ehsani**, Sunnyvale, CA (US); **Silke Maren Witt-Ehsani**, Sunnyvale, CA (US); **Demitrios Leo Master**, Cupertino, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **Nant Holdings IP, LLC**, Culver City, CA (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 364 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/866,444**

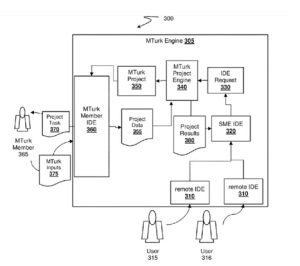
8,099,
8,195,
2008/0155

2010/0332
2012/0029
2012/0072
2012/0131
2012/0158

2013/0047
2013/0151

2013/0227

Joseph D.



(12) **United States Patent**
Liu et al.

(54) **IMAGE-BASED CAPTCHA EXPLOITING CONTEXT IN OBJECT RECOGNITION**

(71) Applicant: **Microsoft Technology Licensing, LLC**, Redmond, WA (US) (56

(72) Inventors: **Jia Liu**, Beijing (CN); **Bin Benjamin Zhu**, Edina, MN (US); **Qiujie Li**, Nanjing (CN); **Shipeng Li**, Palo Alto, CA (US); **Ning Xu**, Changzhou (CN)

(73) Assignee: **Microsoft Technology Licensing, LLC**, Redmond, WA (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

WC

Alu
Lec
at <

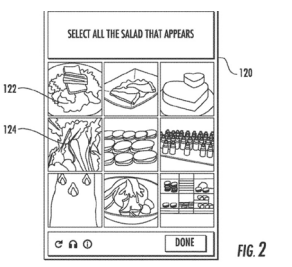
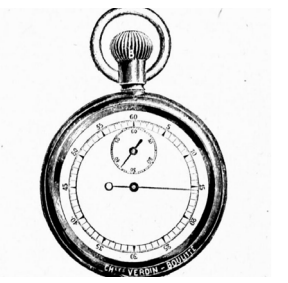
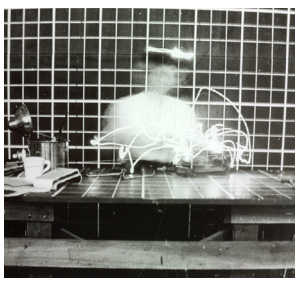


FIG. 2





(19) **United States**
(12) **Patent Application Publication** (10) **Pub. No.: US 20**
Cohn (43) **Pub. Date:**

(54) **ULTRASONIC BRACELET AND RECEIVER FOR DETECTING POSITION IN 2D PLANE**

(71) Applicant: **Amazon Technologies, Inc.**, Seattle, WA (US)

(72) Inventor: **Jonathan Evan Cohn**, Winchester, MA (US)

(21) Appl. No.: **15/083,083**

(22) Filed: **Mar. 28, 2016**

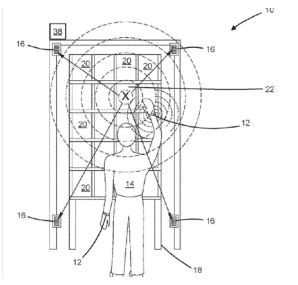
Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
G06Q 10/08 (2006.01)
G06K 7/02 (2006.01)
G08B 6/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***G06Q 10/087*** (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Ultrasonic tracking of a worker's monitor performance of assigned tas includes inventory bits configured t an ultrasonic unit, ultrasonic transdu module. The ultrasonic unit is conf user in proximity to the user's hand ultrasonic sound pulses. The ultr arranged relative to the inventory receive the emitted pulses. The u operatively coupled with the ultr configured to process signals gene transducers to identify an inventory of the ultrasonic unit relative to the The management module monito assigned task based on the identifie



Lithium punk from Bohemia: artistic vapourware against Silicon Valley future

Denisa Kera & Petr Šourek

In 2017, an American economist by the name of Milton ‘Crypto’ Freeman aka Blockfree Money 2.0 spent a weekend in the mountains of Lithopia and wrote a fascinating series of tweets about the habits and customs of its inhabitants. He was stunned by the mountain people’s insistence that property and money are a means of preserving a genealogy, rather than a medium of exchange. Like the inhabitants of the Micronesian island of Yap, Lithopians use large 3D printed coins to preserve their oral memory of ownership, marriages, and important events. They deploy these LiCoins in GPS defined locations at a particular UT defined time to make them visible to the satellites they worship over the open API that they developed for using the data of the Sentinel-2 is Earth observation mission from the EU Copernicus Programme. The open source ‘Lithopia Scanner’ (https://github.com/mt-krainski/lithopia_scanner) is then used for rituals that trigger genealogy transactions programmed as smart contracts on the blockchain platform Hyperledger.

As the mountains yield every precious metal in abundance, the inhabitants of Lithopia worshiped various metals through history. Their main source of metaphysical, political and economic speculations is lithium, the first metal that emerged after the Big Bang, known for its universal scarcity. They use the rare lithium sand from their land and mix it with 3D printable plastic to create tokens of ‘cryptocurrency’. LiCoins are similar in size to the famous Rai stones, but they also hide the illegally obtained lithium from the old mines as means of reclaiming the ownership of their natural resources. The LiCoins are moved around to indicate important transactions and contracts on their blockchain private network visible as a ‘business network archive’ file of the Github page (https://github.com/anonette/lithopia). They strongly believe in a power of the Git to manage the universe, so they allow all citizens to commit and fork code on their Github page that serves as a constitution. Their private Lithopia ledger is a form of oral culture timestamping of all transactions that emphasizes genealogy over exchanges and stewardship over ownership.

The 3D printed LiCoins made from the lithium sand found dumped off the local tin mine are meticulously recorded on their ledger with all the conditions (temperature, % of lithium in the sand, water, plastic amounts) and diligently timestamped to guarantee their authenticity. A noteworthy feature of this lithium currency is that it does not have to be physically present. After concluding a transaction that involves a change of ownership of a LiCoin too large to be conveniently moved, its new owner is quite content to accept the bare acknowledgement of the ownership expressed through the GPS time stamped coordinates of its coin and without so much as a mark to indicate the exchange, the coin remains undisturbed on the former owner’s premises while the transaction is deployed through a smart contract on the Hyperledger platform.

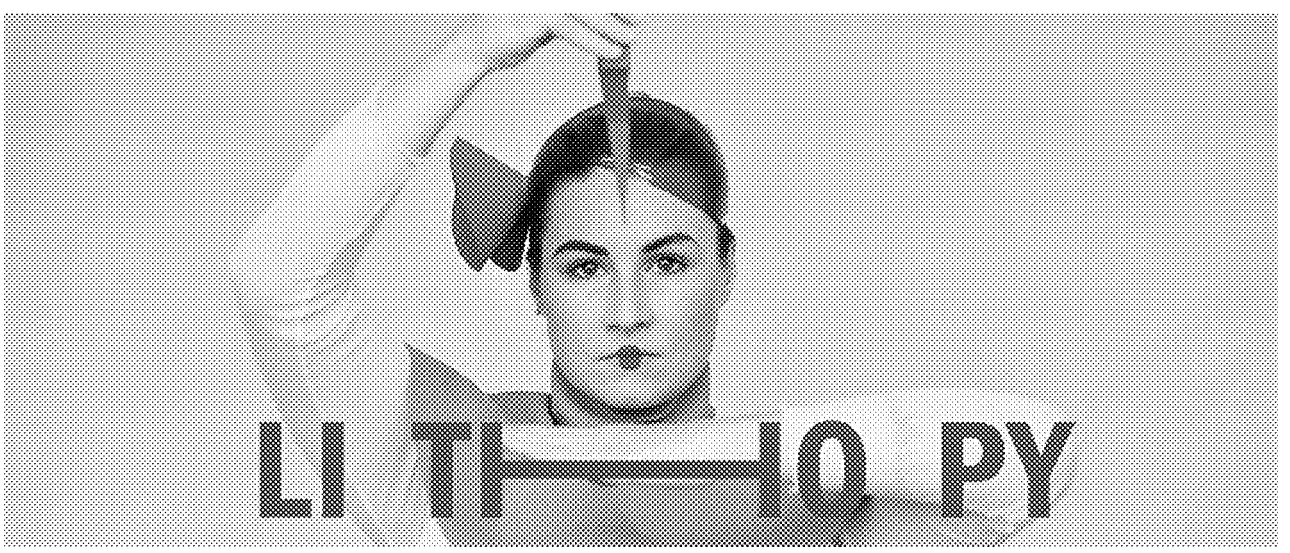
The same is true for house facades with glittering lithium plasters. Often run down and only moderately decorative the lithium facades are much valued, sometimes more than the actual house and land. Unnoticed as they go by strangers, the lithium plasters are important to the local community as hidden treasures. The community serves as a distributed ledger: its members virtually verify and keep record of every transaction through their smart contracts and abundance of time stamped data.

Milton ‘Crypto’ Freeman’s faithful old friend, Meynard ‘Abbé’ Kaynes, assured him that in the Lithopia village the wealth of a family is acknowledged by everyone — and yet no one, not even the family itself. No one ever had laid eye or hand on this wealth; it consisted of over a hundred square meters of lithium plaster, where the size is only known by tradition; for the past two generations it had been, and at that very time it was lost any sight of it! It exists only a legend on the Lithopia ledger.

Many years ago an ancestor of the family, on an expedition after lithium sand, secured this remarkably white and exceedingly valuable load of glittering sand, which was loaded onto lorry to be brought homeward. Then all of sudden, the police appeared, and the party, to stay out of trouble, dumped the whole load of precious sand down the river; their sand was flushed out of sight into common ownership. When they reached home, they all testified that their sand was of extraordinary quality, and that it was lost through no fault of the owner. Thereupon it was universally conceded in their simple faith that the mere accident of its loss was too trifling to mention, and that ought not to affect its marketable value, since it would have made for a magnificent facade. The purchasing power of that lithium sand remains, therefore, as valid as if it were plastered visibly on the walls of the owner’s house.

Milton ‘Crypto’ Freeman’s immediate reaction was: “How silly. How can people be so illogical?”. But he tweeted the next day to apologise: “Before criticising too severely the innocent people of the Ore Mountains, it is worth contemplating the way our bank account, our credit card or cryptocurrency wallet work”. The Lithopia’s crisis may not be that famous as the 2008 economic crisis, but their idiosyncratic ledger system helped them survive and strive against all odds. They are particularly suspicious of Silicon Valley exported futures against which they regularly deploy locally designer artistic vaporware and appropriations of funny code that is part of the national pavilion. They share their story, code and strategy so people everywhere can claim their natural resources and design their own smart contracts.

Lithopia is a brave attempt by few villagers from the Czech lands to reclaim their cosmological heritage of rich Lithium deposits in an age of speculative cryptocurrencies and energy futures dictated by Silicon Valley, Russian interests and various geopolitical games. Lithium was created within the first hundred seconds of the Universe, and it is first metal after the Big Bang, so



speculating and using lithium is as much about future industries as it is about our origins and past.

Lithium punk national pavilion

The Ore Mountains in Bohemia have a long history of mining going back to the Middle Ages that attracted various colonialists, speculators, adventured and alchemists trying to turn some dark and useless matter into gold The flashy Lithium populisms mixed with Polynesian appropriations and open source code is our unique solution to the current crises and reminding everyone of Bohemia as the cradle of automation, robots and dollars.

The Czech Lands have been always known by mining and extraction of rare materials and metals, for example the medieval Czech silver currency “tolar” that gave name to the American Dollar. In last decades the Ore Mountains have been rediscovered as one of the largest world lithium reserves. This staple for lithium batteries driving the future of automated vehicles industry is still driving the interest of various lobbyist. While the politicians were quarrelling about the right to mine lithium, the Lithopians from the nearby villages contacted few developers and philosophers and asked for help. They tried to save the facades of their family houses that used illegally obtained lithium powder from the new colonisers. In the 1980s the former miners considered lithium glittering powder as a junk material freely available for facades of their houses they built in this time. Nowadays, they present a family treasure and a response to the ongoing lithium corruption and speculation with a little help of artistic vaporware that promises more than it can deliver. The performances in front of satellites to trigger blockchain smart contracts may not be the most efficient and smart solution, but it offers a precedent. It is more of a ritual that a business plan or a policy solution connecting the Big Bang nucleosynthesis with modern day blockchain hypes and exploring ideas of owning your future.

Lithium Punk from Bohemia as a theme for the national pavilion is a Czech response to the post-scarcity, techno-utopia behind the popular Solar Punk movement. Instead of solarpunk fantasies, we offer a dark, lithium inspired sarcasm. The installation of plastic and lithium waste objects together with our artistic vapourware link the present corruption and financial speculations to the Big Bang cosmology. The installation and the Github open source project respond critically, materially, and metaphorically to the problem of Earth minerals extraction, resources scarcity and man’ s drive to endless energy production and newest search for perpetuum mobile. This lithium ‘punk’ speculations from the impoverished Czech northern provinces aim at bringing a unique take on issues of technological craftsmanship and folklore. They perform and mock present fantasies of automation, blockchain technologies etc. as the modern version of the old alchemist dreams of limitless energy sources, perpetuum mobile, that will bring liberation and end the of colonialism. It also mocks the current speculative craze in ICOs by allowing you to invest in facades in a ghost mining town to support the local ex-miners as co-investor.

Since lithium is the first metal after the Big Bang, the project poses important questions of stewardship of this source created in the first seconds of the universe. Who is the rightful owner of our cosmological heritage? From Big Bang nucleosynthesis to modern day corruption the lithium and all our metals and minerals are a constant source of conflicts. We offer low tech, messy folklore and DIY hacks for everyone to explore these issues and come up with their own version of Lithopia. Even if you are not about to set up an activist takeover of your local resources, you can still use our Lithopian Github page and installation to explore issues of algorithmic governance and take part in our workshops and adventures where we design the future smart contracts and create a space for code to meet metals, satellites to meet ledgers and make smart villages instead of cities.

Lithopia Punk history and geography

The origin of the genre refers to Ore mountains and Cinovec = the Mountain of Tin / Zinnwald = Tinwood is an ancient mining hamlet in the rust belt at the Czech German border. This mountain stands for staple, a place of supply, a source.

It was tin, a rare metal in Europe and the staple of Bronze Age, that gave this mountain its name.

Tin was followed by tungsten, for filament in classic light bulbs and the staple in cold war arms race.

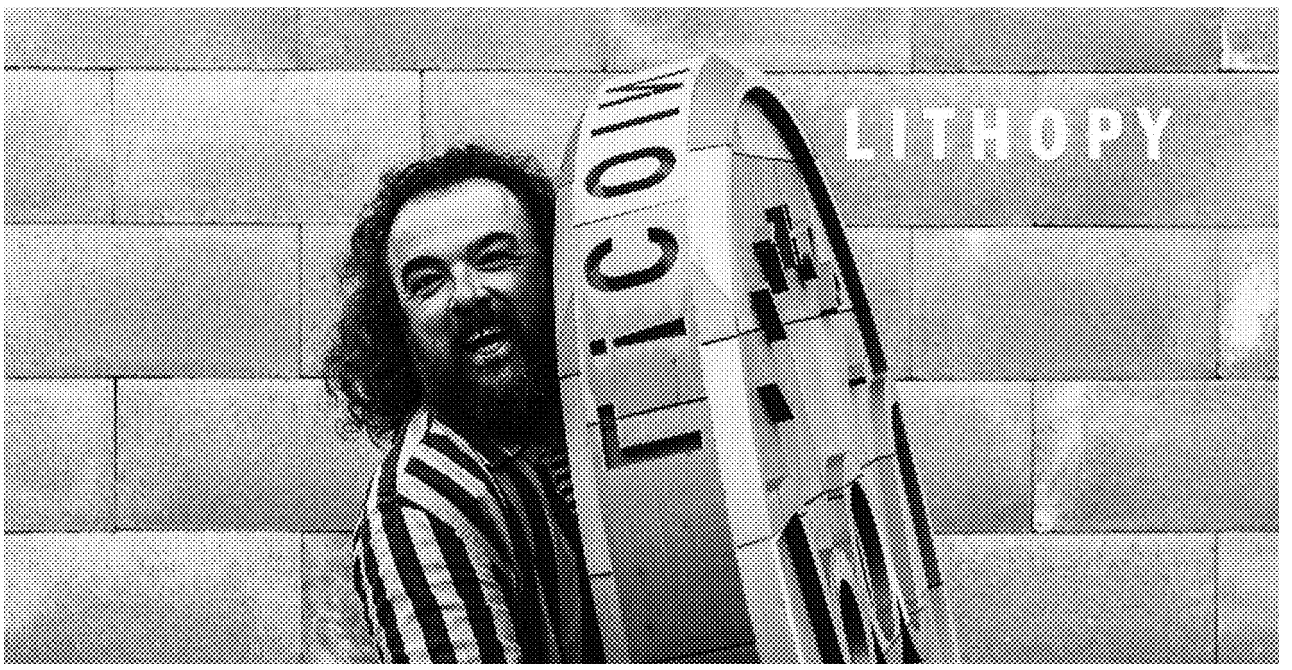
While mining for tin and tungsten, miners had been digging a silvery metal out of the mountain. They may have been familiar with the stuff. It was lithium. Anyway, it was considered a junk and lithium mica glittered under the sun. The glittering sand became popular among miners who built houses for their families in the surrounding area, which gave birth to phaenomenon of lithium-clad houses of the Cinovec area.

The tungsten mining was closed down after the border opened, the arms race stopped and a new technology redefined tungsten filament bulbs as heating units. Miners lost their jobs, the rust took up its silent work. Only facades of their houses glitter under the sun. All of sudden, the Mountain of Lithium was born out of the eviscerated Mountain of Tin and Tungsten, once again pregnant with promise.

It’s time for lithium, the lightest metal and the staple of lithium battery, the leading technology in electricity storage. Some 3% of World’s lithium reserve may be soaked in the hard rock of the Mountain of Tin and Tungsten. Once again, the mountain stands for staple, the promise of supply, the source of wealth. In the meantime, emotions ran high, as the Mountain of Promise became the staple of election race and its discontents were virtually mined for campaign promises (many of them contradictory or even mutually exclusive). The lithium facades kept glittering under the sun. Made of the then junk, their apparent disregard for value, commodity and promise makes them void of any credit, their sin of décor is perpetuating the inherited lack of frugality, this is the place of non-supply, the non-source. Now imagine what would happen to them if we mine them as cryptocurrency.

A Sunny Day in Lithopy

It is a sunny day in Lithopy, a quackerish-hackerish community given to transparency, justice and accountability. In Lithopy, sunny days are made for transactions. No clouds prevent satellites from keeping an eye on you. Satellites track your every move. A decentralized, distributed and public digital ledger of blockchain records every transaction. On sunny days, contracts are made. Assets change hands. People make payments and friends, marry and divorce. Lithopians use coins big enough to catch the eye of a satellite. They shake hands for minutes. When you travel to Lithopy on a sunny day, you never pull your hand back before a Lithopian unless you are less serious about business. In Lithopy, hugs are big and kisses are many to make sure satellites and the blockchain records their affection, love and friendship. There are no excess, no frivolity in their actions. Their all-or-nothing gestures, their fits of laughter, their floods of tears are in fact all well measured. You may notice the furtive looks they cast toward the sky. Whatever Lithopians do on sunny days, they do before the face of satellites. In Lithopy, all social contact is a smart contract.



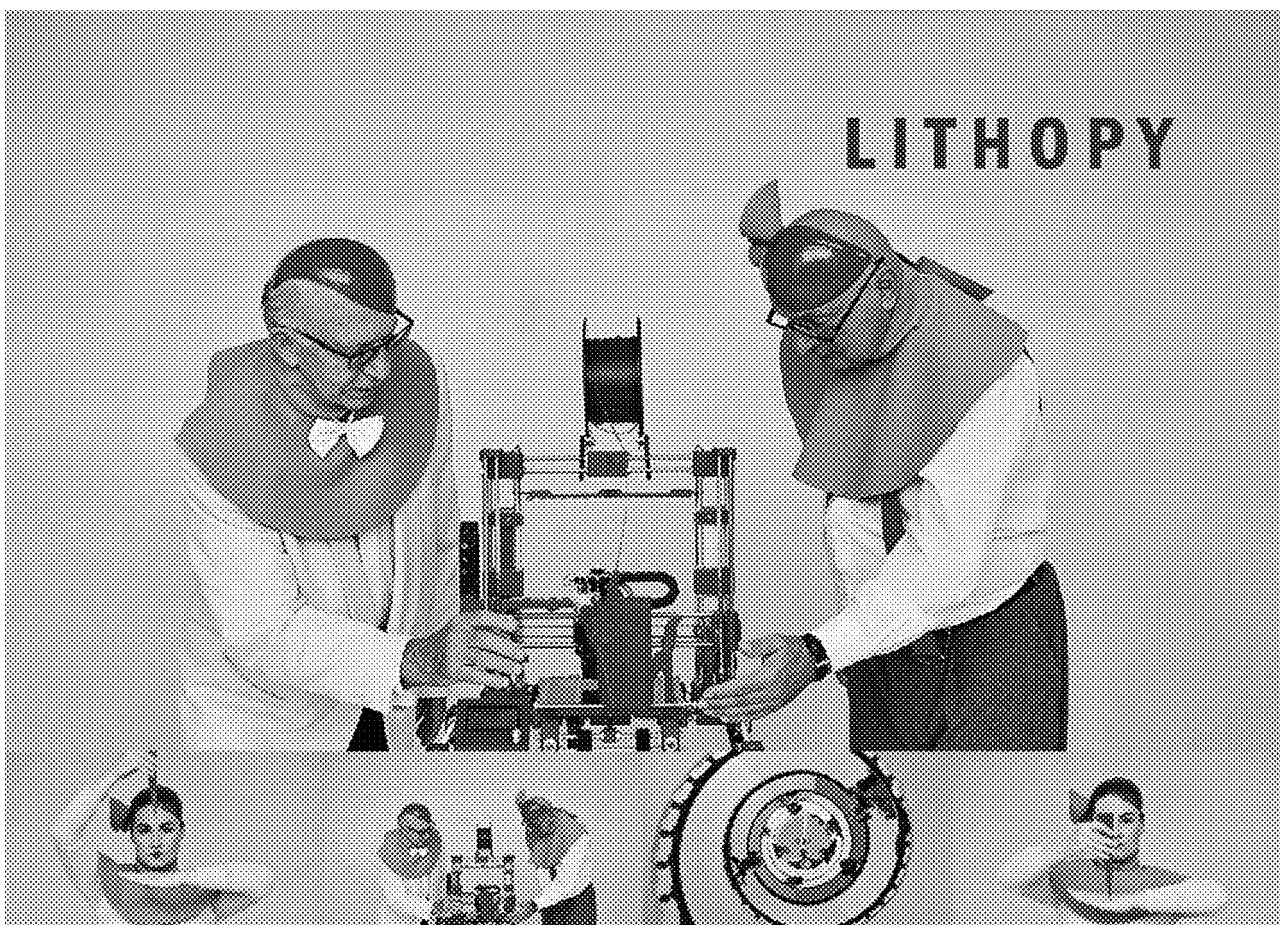

```
    Smart contract from Lithopia
    /**
    * LithopiaPlaceSold transaction triggered by satellite data changing
the owner of a property
    * @param {org.lithopia.basic.LithopiaPlaceSold} lithopiaPlaceSold -
the LithopianPlaceSold transaction
    * @transaction
    */
    async function selling(lithopiaPlaceSold) { // eslint-disable-line
no-unused-vars
    const place = lithopiaPlaceSold.place;
    const flag = place.flagColors[0].flagColor;
    // if thecolor didn't change, the owner remains
    if (flag === 'red'){
    place.owner = lithopiaPlaceSold.newOwner.name;
    }
    else{
    place.owner = lithopiaPlaceSold.place.owner;
    }
    // update the newOwner
    const assetRegistry = await getAssetRegistry('org.lithopia.basic.
LithopiaPlace');
    await assetRegistry.update(place);
    // emit who is the old or new owner
    let placeEvent = getFactory().newEvent('org.lithopia.basic',
'LithopiaPlaceTransactions');
    placeEvent.place = lithopiaPlaceSold.place;
    placeEvent.newOwner = place.owner;
    emit(placeEvent);
    }
```

Lithopian Blockchain Providence

Lithopia streaming packets service (pay per packet) on the blockchain where all IP packets are fragmented and the 188-byte streaming packets (Packetized Elementary Stream - PES) are individually registered on the ledger. Lithopians decided to measure their time in packets of data to create a 'blockchain-ed' paradise. Packets on a ledger fulfil the old dream of a divine providence supervising and managing every occurrence and every creature. They perform what Christianity and Judaism imagined as a continual creation, sometimes described as (ההההה ההההה; Hashgochoh Protis) and what Descartes in his 'Meditation III' describes as a God that conserves the world by continuously creating it, and what Leibnizian imagines as a pre-established harmony. To stream and timestamp packets on the ledger is to design an all-seeing, all present and perpetually seeing God. The timestamps and blocks of all the transactions and activities in the life of the Lithopians is a form of divine providence, but also a magical ritual of protection via God's eyes.

Acknowledgments

The design fiction work was supported by the Czech Ministry of Culture and the Czech Industrial Design Museum. The research into anticipatory prototyping, governance, and design is supported by Horizon 2020 Marie Curie Individual Fellowship.



¡ VIVAN LAS UTOPIAS !

Jean-Jacques Birgé

(Article originally published in of the Revue du Cube #2 (March 2012)

I am fortunate to belong to a generation bottle-fed with utopias. We thought we were making the revolution, we only reformed manners. With one voice we shouted our revolt against the exploitation of man by man, understanding that change would never happen through the ballot box. And everyone in their own corner imagined new worlds that were quickly converted into art. Whether one chooses the barricades or the flowers, the cobblestones uncovered the beach. The reaction was brutal, insidious, misleading, defamatory. On the one hand, some regularly attributed to May 1968 what was only Capital's answer. On the other hand the merchants seized the goose that laid the golden egg and betrayed the passion that animated a youth showing their teeth, huffing and puffing. From there the dreams of young computer scientists were bought to life - they were going to revolutionize the uses, crunching the apple and dispensing their utopias to the whole world.

New technologies are only tools, and to the freedom they offer us, immediately respond the rogue trade, the civic services of the institution and attempt to control power. When resistance becomes stronger, the governments legislate, send their police, confiscate, punish, sometimes kill. They kill more often than we think, but the rebels organize each time to reinvent new spaces of creation and freedom, while being kept under surveillance.

Each new tool is a toy in the hands of its creators. It's up to us to make a weapon of it against organized crime, mass manipulation, cynicism and defeatism. As long as there are embers, the hope of seeing the fire reborn will be legitimate. More than ever, all forces are needed to create new utopias.

I will end with the song ¡Vivan las utopias! that I wrote with Bernard Vitet in 1996 for the double album Buenaventua Durruti (nato 3164-3244) and sung by my daughter Elsa (who was then eleven years old), since it is said that in France everything ends in song.

We reap what we sow
Men have the divine art
To invent systems
Which are all inhuman
Theorists of numbers
Do reduce the heads
Hiding in their shadows
What they get from the beasts

What do you have to offer me
Of all animals
The man is the most stupid
What do you have to offer me
Order is the worst disorder
I live life to the full

Senile nomenclature
Arrogant arrivals
Or necrophilous bankers
It's the power that kills
Even its daughters and sons
Gift of the irrational
Services abuse
It's hardly a secret

What do you have to offer me
I don't want any job
But the one of loving
What do you have to offer me
What Bible is your book
I just have lust for life

Quickly turn off the light
Listen to the birds
Stifle the prayers
As social systems
Treat your neighbours well
The theory collapses
In front of a human being
The horror is the crowd

What do you have to offer me
If the earth owns me
Its ghost obsesses me
What do you have to offer me
I don't want anything
Even my own freedom

You can listen to the song on http://youtu.be/PtXb9iNExuc

N.B. The title refers to the cry ¡Vivan las cadenas! heard in The Phantom of Liberty, Luis Buñuel's 1974 film. In his autobiography the filmmaker recounts that hatred of liberal ideas introduced by Napoleon, the Spanish people shouted Long live chains! when the Bourbons return.

Retiring Victoria

Anna Vera Kelle and Leoni Voegelin

The week of the summer school “Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies” in Victoria (Romania) was an insight into a social fabric we could experience. The programme gathered students, scientists, and artists most of whom came from Romania, France, the UK, and Germany, with others coming from countries across the world. The idea of the one-week-long summer school was to explore the relationship between architecture, technology and utopia, environment and industry, between imaginary communities and their development, in order to evaluate possibilities for transforming these forgotten places. The city of Victoria serves as a starting point to explore unfinished utopian societies. Victoria has around 7000 inhabitants and was founded as a socialist city built from scratch town only 70 years ago to accompany a munition factory.

It always has been a town dependent on mono-industry. Nowadays the factory is owned by Americans producing methanol. In its “best” times it employed around 7000 people, now you will find around 300 people working there. What began as a growing “city of the youth” ideal for the (utopian idea) of “the new man” became a “shrinking city” with nearly 50% of the population being pensioners.

The story of the city appears to be like a life cycle. It feels like after going through turbulent times, witnessed contrasting eras, it is now looking forward to a slow and peaceful retirement. This is not meant to be a sarcastic comment. We experienced it as a tranquil and in a special way colourful town in the middle of a beautiful landscape. To us thinking of ways to “revive” it seems an inappropriate intervention. This matches the fact that more and more people built holiday homes in Victoria. The potential of tourism is also a future that local authorities rely on.

Obviously, this is an insight into our very personal impression of being in Victoria for a week but as there is never only one story about anything (an aspect that Friedrich Kirschner highly emphasized in his lecture on “Situated Drama aka Enacting Complexity” he gave during this week), all of us collected completely different impressions and stories as you can read in this journal.

We had the pleasure to combine our impressions with opinions of the

local people during a party on the last night of our stay in Victoria. Most of the participants of the summer school gathered in this night, outside at the main square having a drink with the people living here. This brought us back to the idea and structure of the summer school and its second aim: to encounter. People from different backgrounds, including the sciences and the arts met up to share their different ideas and lenses to look at the world. During the mornings we were allocated free time , but we were encouraged to walk through town in groups, visit the factory and view the landscape. The afternoons were dedicated to lectures on different topics in connection with utopia: architecture and utopias, technology and utopia, communities and utopia and reinvesting utopias.

In the following, we summarised our experience of the town in an audio-visual essay (shot with our smartphone). A short video that we realised under the thought of the “derive” the Situationists used in the sixties to form their psychological map of a city. For some a map of emotions, to us a map filled with wonder, with lucid moments, with impressions and our way of trying to understand our glance on Victoria and the week we spend there. Victoria, the city of Roses, the city of youth, the city which is coming to a more quiet period in its live. A city on the skirt of the Pyrenees, where the kids are enjoying their summer holidays, with afternoons to kill and time the citizens got to spend in an everyday life.

Link to video: https://vimeo.com/345158995.

VICTORIA'S SECRET

Maria Mandea
Teodora Ungureanu
Silviu Borş
Sukanya Deepak
Audrey Pety
Sophia Nan Wu

~~Welcome to Etherbox!~~

~~This pad text is synchronized as you type, so that everyone viewing this page sees the same text. Add __NOPUBLISH__ to prevent this pad from being archived.~~

3 . teodora, maria, sophia, audrey, sukanya, silviu

big umbrella project
Victoria's secret (name of the project)

Narrative puzzle in a post-industrial city

build your own utopia
territorial image, reading territory on different levels
ref. Bernard Cache, earth move: the furnishing of territories

Is there a right way to understand a city ?
-> methodology:
identify parts of the city with different identities
then how to visualize this

video : effecto koulechov 1/ 2 /3
difference of perception

result :
The narrative puzzle of Victoria City
http://superserios.ro/Narrative-puzzle
brb
puzzle with photos or stories of Victoria

#Who is Victoria ?
wikipedia
is it the city of roses

special part of the city = the mountains

perceived image of victoria
maps made by summer camp participants on the first day
then
viromet
confront perspectives
swinmming pool
sofia from china
language difference shall not be a barrier, but an asset, ice-breaker

questionaries
fav place of victoria (swimming pool)

other q: what do you want to change in victoiria
victoria's swing
- inside / outside perspcetives
inside perspective of victoria
maps made by citizens of V

historial part : hitorical perspective
extract from monography of the city = loop with dana's talk 1st day
third layer of id o the city, image a city can give trhough time
a zine to document the different layers of understanding Victoria
each page indiv info, when you read the book info is always layered
third side, after geo / id / different victorias

3. different victorias
silvio :: first photos of victoria , without no people
first person major / zoomba
what is victoria .silvio, sophia, rosanne and .... names ...
subjective vision
different scales / stories
talk to as many people as possible
picnic (was cool)
include and meet the people

candy bar / mountans for free
crystal eye - people back to victoria, after living in roma / london etc...
make the message on candy bars ! COME IN VICTORIA !

! cat !

---------- QUESTIONS ----------

q : talking about diff kind of perspectives, we had different answers, ex roses were planted bc smell factory... not loose individuals perspetives
a: outside point of vue -

so little questions,
so little typing...

Narrative Puzzle in a Post-Industrial City*

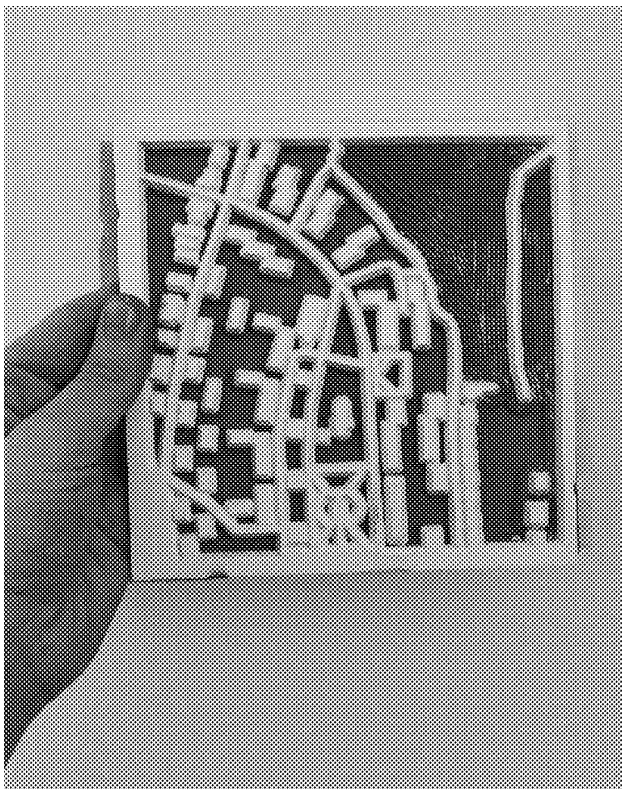
Maria Mandea, Teodora Ungureanu

*build your own Victoria and other hacks

**understanding the city, participatory practices and (not so serious) games

During the Victoria Summer workshop, we became interested in how the local community and we as visitors understand the city. Do we perceive it similarly and if not, which are the differences. Following these questions, we came to explore how we all create our virtual image and story of territory.

We set to develop a game in the form of a puzzle, recreating Victoria from its perceptions. With the help of our summer school colleagues, Silviu, Sukanya, Audrey and Sophia, we gathered images and stories from different parts of the city. Then we took the map and divided it into smaller pieces that could be reassembled by the players. These pieces each have their corresponding images and stories. Therefore, each time the map is reassembled, the narrative also gets reassembled. For each and every player of our puzzle, it results in a unique Victoria. This process of rearranging the city is similar to exploring a city without directions from anyone. As you walk through the city, you create your own version of the territory from everything you experience in this exploration.



The game's concept of reading, interpreting and rearranging the territory is based on a combination of theories. On one side, we have Bernard Caches understanding of the image of territory and on the other site Lev Kuleshov's ideas about montage. We used the latter to develop our framework of reassembly within the game. The hierarchy between the city centre and the periphery is challenged with the rearrangements made by each new player.

Picnic la Casa de Cultură

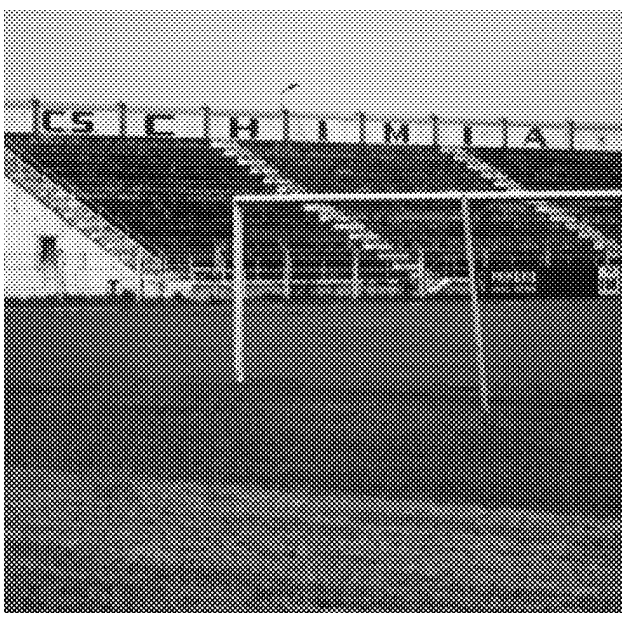
Food brings people together. Given this simple fact, on Friday the 28th of June we, the participants at the Victoria Summer Camp, organised a picnic in front of Victoria Culture House (ro. Casa de cultură). We wanted to meet and engage with the local community. We wanted to hear their own stories of Victoria. In the days before the picnic, we went through the city and invited the people we met to join and bring more of their friends or neighbours.

By creating a social media event and printing invitations to give away for the Victorians, we created the perfect opportunity

and pretext to start talking with them. We wanted to make them a bit more relaxed around us and to get to know them better. The result of the picnic was a little party that took place in a green area which isn't usually used. Many children and young people came and started talking with the participants at the summer camp. We heard some new stories about Victoria, heard new versions of the same stories or just ate some good watermelon.

Collateral Victorias

Silviu Borș



Empty Stadium in an empty town - or, my 28th Birthday Party place

In his widely acclaimed graphic novel "Here", American illustrator Richard McGuire analyzes a single corner of a room for a large period of time, his reflection on a small confined space becoming a true Cartesian visual odyssey. In the summer of 2019, unbeknown to us, our group - consisting mostly of members coming from outside of Romania - would take part in a similar exercise. With a different range of educational backgrounds intertwining in the fields of design and cultural heritage, we were set to unfold the artichoke layers of the city of Victoria - the Romanian Venice of post-industrial blues, from which we all left as shaken as John Ruskin did from the capital of Veneto.

I use the term "shaken" in opposition with Victoria's stillness, for as the neighboring mountain chain that preceded its urban development, the city of youth appears kept in amber, resembling a life sized time capsule. Seeing that Victoria's entire genesis was solely catalyzed by industrial motives, it comes as no surprises that as the machines and mechanisms of the plants are facing the kill-switch of poorly handled privatizations, so are the revitalization horizons of the city becoming slimmer. Victoria's Hidden Orthodox Church, built in secrecy in an apartment block during a period in Romania's history in which the construction of new religious

Field with Apartment Blocks - or, Frisbee Arena

Industrial Failure - or, Industrial Landmark

buildings was highly forbidden, now resides emptier and emptier, with funerals being the main cultural events that can gather larger parts of its once powerful community. The City Hall, The Children Activity Center and a housing complex for the poor all reside in identical buildings, the once striking villas designed by a foreign architect from the Republic of Georgia sheltering different current transformations, suited to their new functions. The city's residents live quietly and composed in rigid socialist apartments, but break free in the way that they arrange and take care of their impromptu gardens.

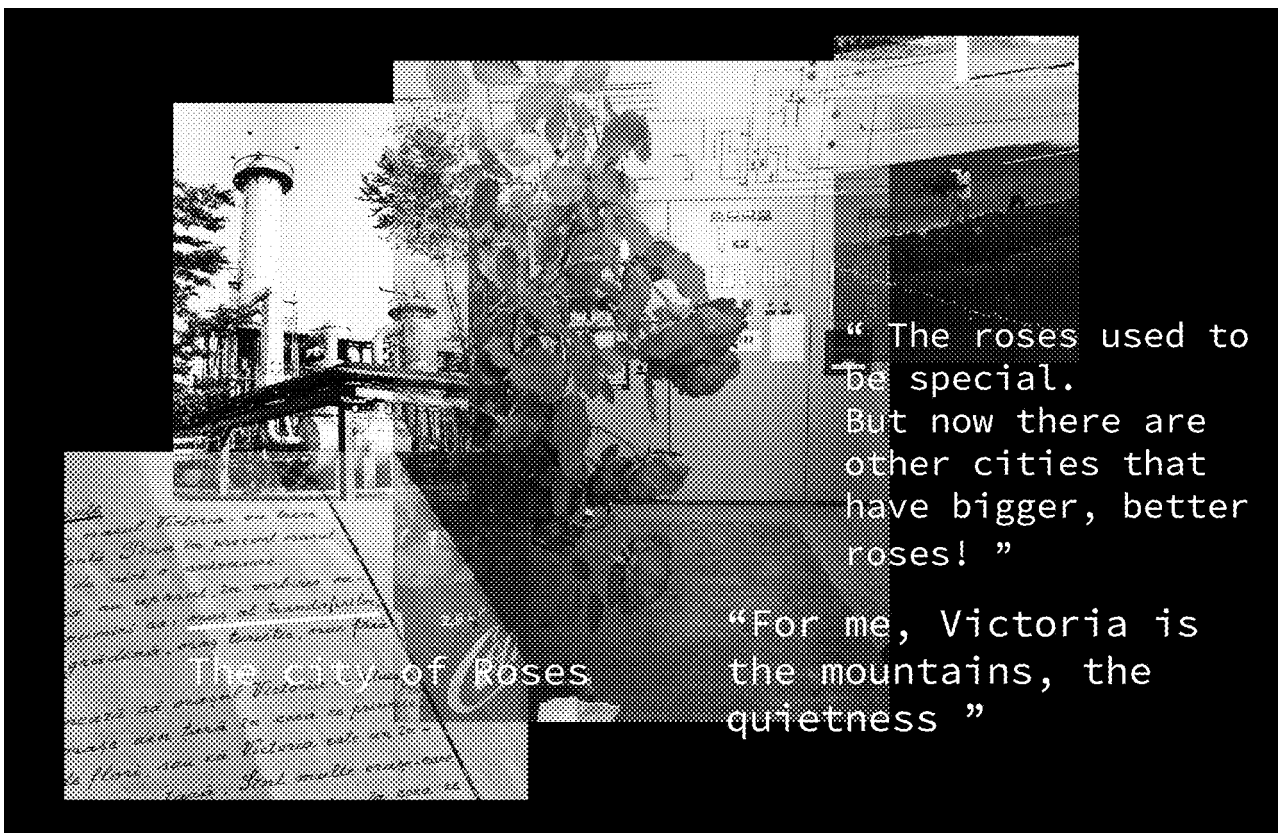
It is this type of architectural rarities that form Victoria's palimpsest, as its stillness has harbored a multitude of curious happenings, and these particular occurrences proceed to mold the lenses through which we can observe this ever interesting urban entity.

Who's Victoria: Layers of a city

Sukanya Deepak, Audrey Pety, Sophia Nan Wu

By looking up "Victoria" online on Wikipedia, observing the landscape of the city, visiting the church, talking with the priests, visiting the old factory, interviews with the local inhabitants and also young people who have returned, the city unfolds a multi-layered image to us. Each layer is represented by a unique perspective of different people, different times, and different politics. Each perspective holds their individual story and understanding of the city, which altogether forms the beauty of Victoria.

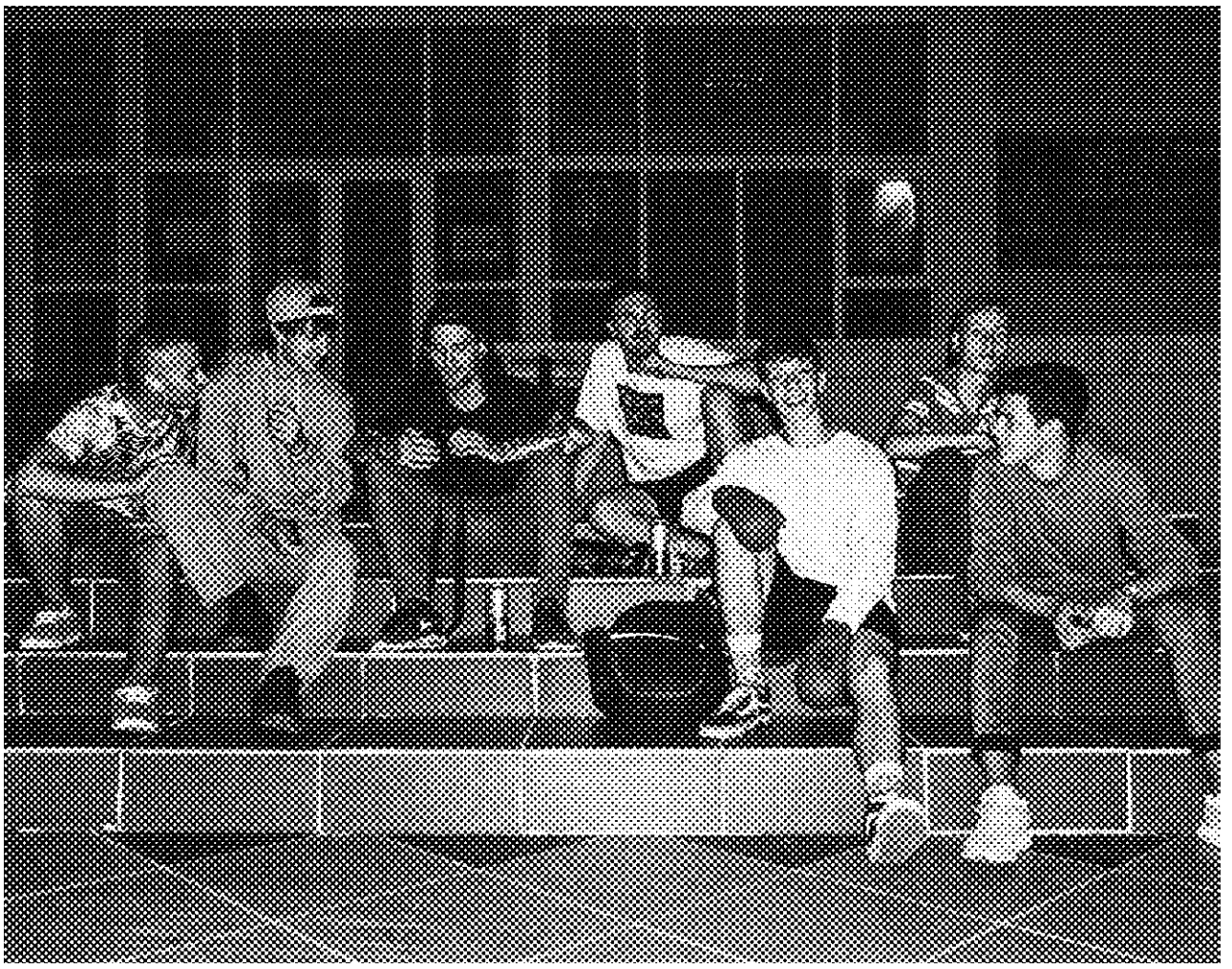
By taking into account different perspectives of local, historical, official and the first impression we had of Victoria, we aim to create a new way of understanding what creates the identity of a utopian city like Victoria.



Oraş al tinereţii / City of Youth

Kevin Paterka, Lars Köppl, Konstantin Hehl

As we could learn from a discussion between the mayor, the administration of the city and the participants of the Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies Summer Camp project, one of the central ideas behind the population of Victoria was the specific recruitment of young people. They were supposed to be the centre of society which would enliven and secure the city's future at the same time. This idea provided the local chemical and arms industry with diligent workers and guaranteed young people a secure employment.



However, the impression we had 70 years after Victoria's founding broke with the concept of the directed "City of Youth". The average age was very high, young children had to be looked for and in general it was all pretty abandoned.

But in our eyes, particularly the youth could be the motor and power for any deserted place. Their energy and imagination shape the new future and is crucial for the further development of each city.

We wanted to risk a glimpse to see how the future of Victoria might look like and ask the youth itself about their today's utopian visions.

At first, it was difficult to establish real contact. Due to our extraordinary role, we were treated as we would be celebrities and everybody knew that we don't belong here, it was very hard to find open and honest conversations. We had to disconnect from our touristic system in between the Summer Camp to become a small part of the Victorian system in order to understand it from the inside. The way we looked at the city and its citizens got less analytical and more emotional.

We discovered the city of Victoria with honest joy and playful curiosity until this very night where we met a handful of teenagers on the stairs in front of the Casa de Cultura. We connected with them and discovered that nothing really differentiates us.

Through them, we gained a very intimate and personal insight into Victoria's current Youth Culture. We did not ask for it but we simply joined them everyday and did what they did. The dirty steps in front of the Casa de Cultura turned into our meeting spot and within a very short time we became part of the group ourselves.

This was the start of an exchange between our diverse realities.

Thanks to their individual nature each of them inspired and helped us to develop a fresh and personal perspective on Victoria.

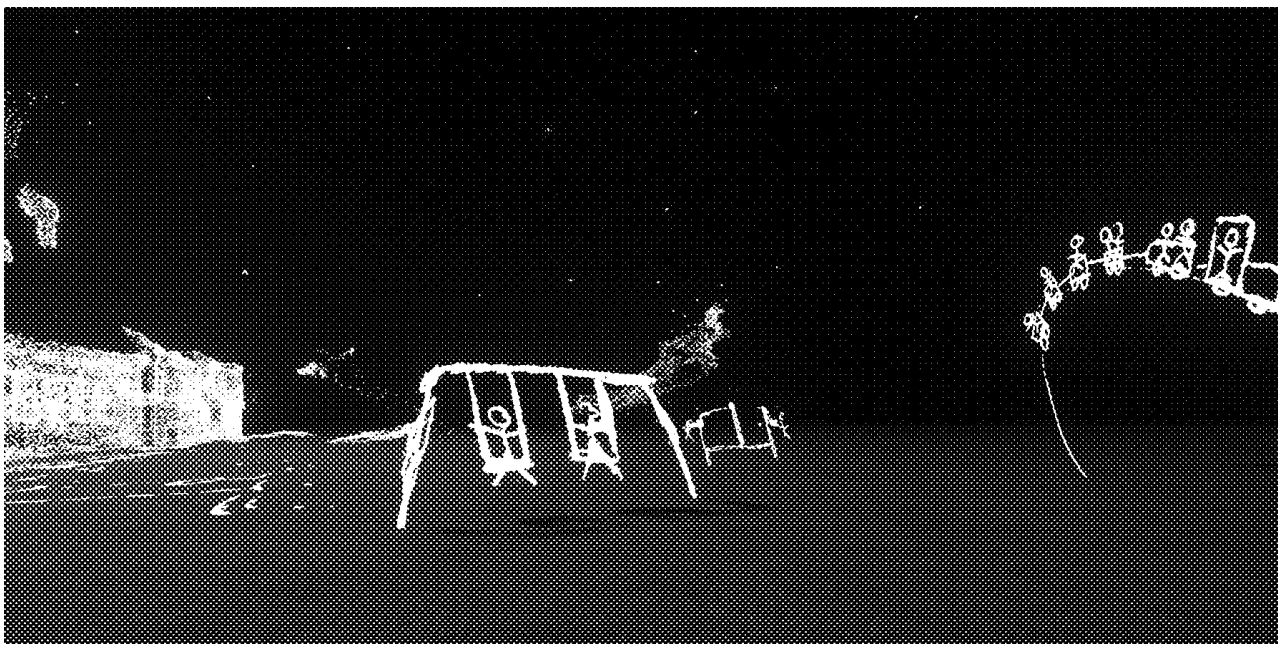
As a result, we collected all our experiences into a Victorian Youth Magazine called "Oraș al tinereții".

Nevertheless, the biggest achievement of our project and time in Victoria is surely our grown friendship.

Victoria 2065

Elena Lohmann, Vincent Johnson, Tamara Bertran

Victoria 2065 is the idea of capturing the city of Victoria with a method called photogrammetry. With so, a point cloud is created which shows a transparent 3D world, in which the city consists only of fragments, only giving a glimpse of what Victoria looks like for a moment to capture an emotion, not a reality. At the same time, it lets you see through all layers Victoria has. By doing interviews with the school kids of Victoria, a future vision was created through drawings that the children did. These drawings were digitalized and placed all throughout the photogrammetry World.



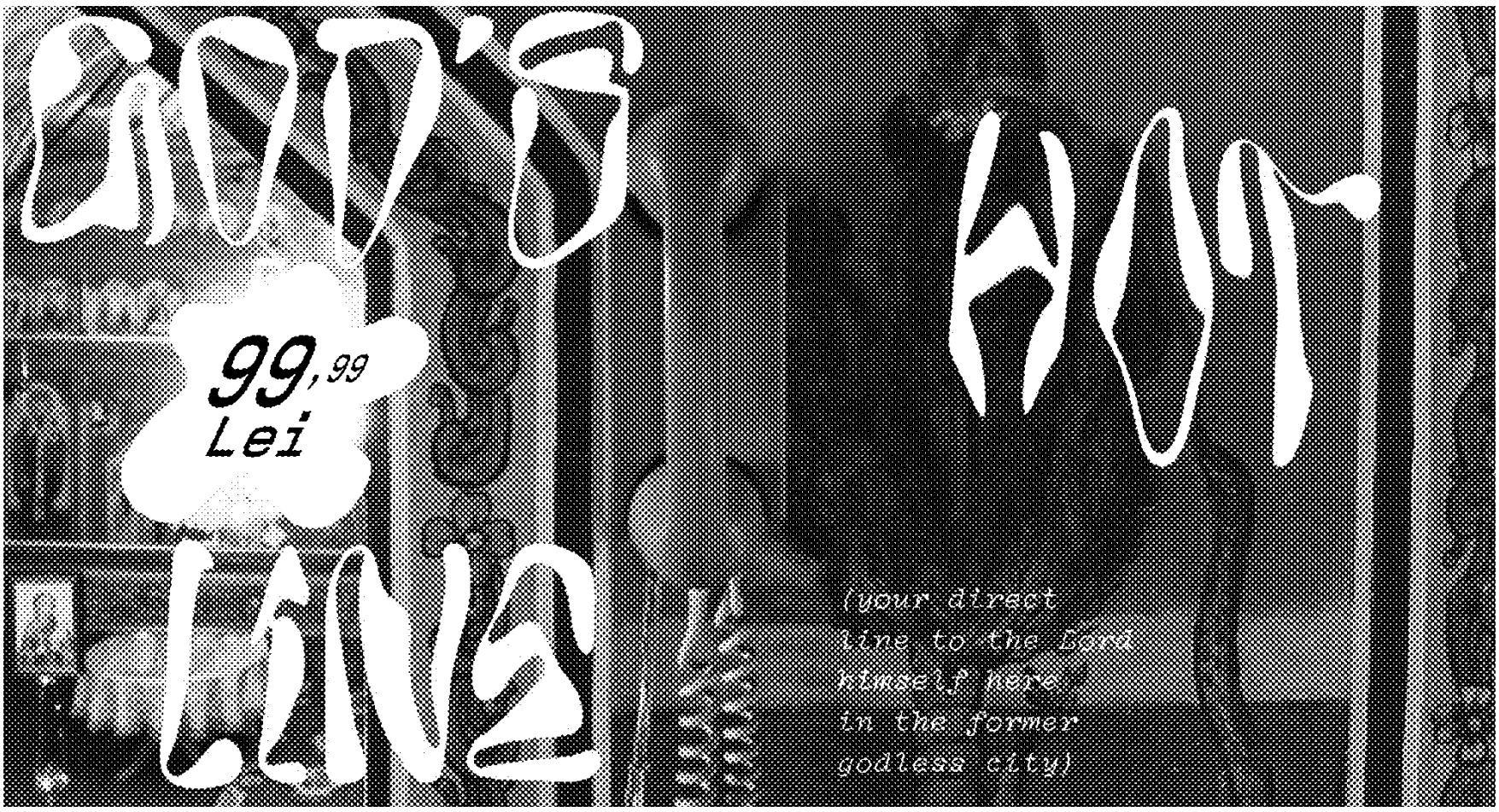
Victoctoaca

Edoardo Pirrodi and Matthew de Kretser

Based on what we were told about the town, we initially had the idea to shoot a video depicting how bleak life in Victoria was - the antithesis of utopia. However, we soon realised this was not the case and the accompanying video is our result.

Utopia is not a fixed concept and is by its very definition non-existent. Therefore, utopia can be found in seemingly insignificant actions, whether it is walking down a quiet street or observing a lone rose.

The toaca toaca is a percussion instrument used by the Orthodox Church, the main religion in Romania.

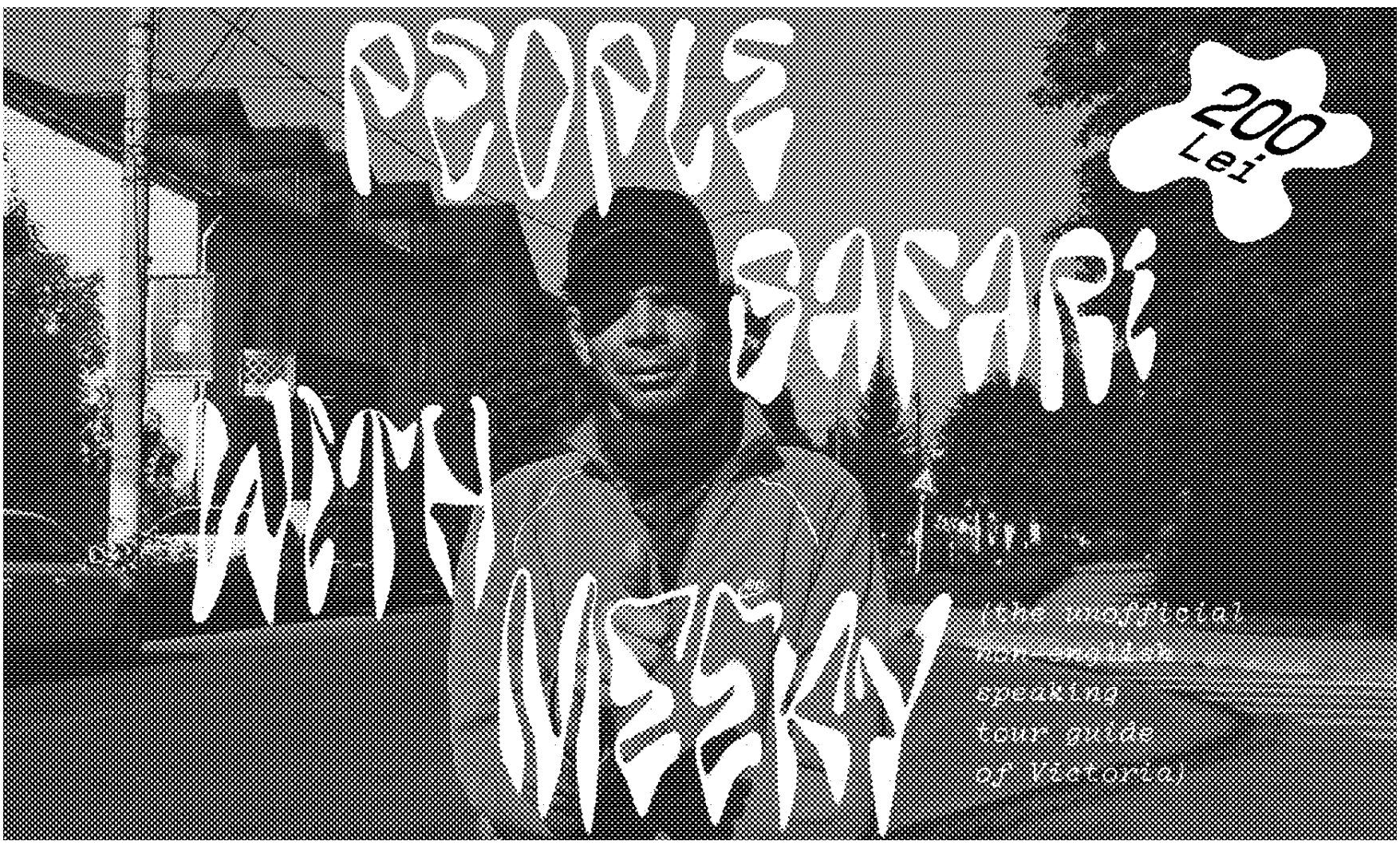


Victoria For Sale

Marcelo Andreguetti

After spending a week in Victoria during the Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies Summer School, I felt a very strong sense of being an intruder in such a small and tidy community, which had somehow its quietness disturbed by this flock of students visiting the city for a few days. And that was in direct oposition with the pleads I heard during a meeting with the Mayor and some local authorities and shop vendors, and their desire of continuing to disrupt this “quietness” by attracting tourists to the city, using the mountains and the city’s communist history as a selling point. In a way, this resounded to me a lot with the idea of late stage capitalism and the absurd and hypocritical aspects of it.

As a result, I did a draft of an absurdist prospect sheet, selling travel packages to Victoria for visitors that want to explore its quietness and its “nothingness” - either its seemingly uninteresting and mundane things, or even the meaningless tokens of the communist days that still resist. That, for me, would consist of an imaginative utopia that you could explore by yourself, a chance to create an alternate history the way you’d find most appealing in a place where nothing really happens.



The sensitivities and the empathy of Victoria City
Victoria through the eyes of three people

Alexandra Beldiman and Jane Cook

Victoria is a town in the western part of Brasov, Romania, near the Fagaras Montains. In 1939 it was bild a factory called UCEA during World War II. In the ’49 it was named „Colonia Ucea” within ’54 to VICTORIA.

Why is the reason that we think, as a team, Victoria have “sensitivities and some empathy”? Simple! Victory is a city that has her own life, a specific life that talks about the identity of the place, but we must be receptive to what messages the city sends us.

ALEXANDRA BELDIMAN:

I start to observe people and then their activities. At that moment an idea came to my mind asking myself: “What kind of life does this city have?” “What sounds does Victoria have?” … So, through my mind stroll the idea of sounds, but “what kind of sounds?” - using a sensory methodology, the urban life of this city will be completely discovered. Walking alone through the city, I began to notice common elements or less common. - Well, I made some recordings and videos too, who could pinpoint in this “alive organism” called Victoria, an authentic elements what can define the territory.

I associated the estates and the activities with various important urban areas. Basically, the sound in an area becomes the most valuable aspect, defining and outlining itself the urban space. In some cases this urban space is a public space - such as the fountain in front of The Victoria Cultures House - she mark the center-point of Victoria - or the fountains of Viroment - the Romanian chemical industry - who mark the limits of the industrial platform. The difference between the two sounds mentioned before - The Victoria Cultures House and The Viroment - Romanian chemical industry- is the intensity of the sounds they generate. The sound of The Victoria Cultures House has a dynamic sound - which awakens your desire to become more active during the day and the urban space of this area make you feel welcoming in the city through readability and openness. In opposite, the sound of The Viroment - Romanian chemical industry becomes anonymous, unaware and it’s loses the intensity of the dynamics sound. As a team, we have identified only four public fountains throughout the city which only two are functionable and one is usable for the people.

Annually, Victoria have a local competition named The International Festival of Drums and Bells, organized in July at the “Holy Emperors Constantine and Elena” Church. “Toaca” is a percussion musical instrument from the class of idiophones used in Orthodox liturgy. This instrument is built from a wooden candle or sometimes a thick bent iron plate, where it is struck with one or two hammers, at the times set for prayer. In my case, I caught these sounds, not at the church as we used to hear, but in a residential area, where children used wooden-sticks and beat with them in the benches, behind the block, where they lived and played.

I caught several sounds in Victoria, different sounds like a batter-carpets made by a lady from the socialist-blocks area. With this batter-carpets the lady was shaking the dust mats.

Finally, I can talk about other kinds of sounds observable here, in Victoria -a sound by the tractor - a street song recorded one afternoon when to young guys crossed a road or the sound of the canal from the sewer-cover.

Looking at the city from this perspective - sensory methodology - I can say that Victoria impressed me in a profound way. We used this method to perceive the not imagined or supposed qualities and weaknesses of the city

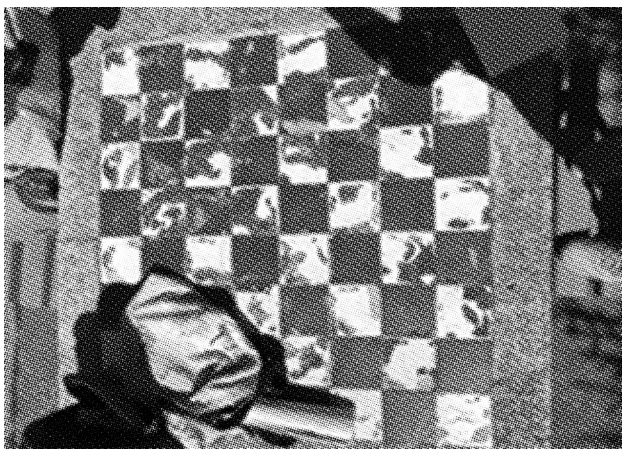
JANE COOK:

As an artist and PhD researcher in contemporary drawing, Victoria gave me the opportunity to draw the unseen and unobserved.

I drew the temperature I felt as I walked the city, the aroma of cooking in the evening, snippets of conversations, the movement of the shadows, shy smiles, curious glances, residents, road signs, drain covers, native flora and fauna to name but a few. These drawings are contained within the pages of the sketchbook which accompanied me throughout the week in Victoria.

The late artist and theorist John Berger clearly and succinctly explains ‘To draw is to look, examining the structure of appearances. A drawing of a tree shows, not a tree, but a-tree-being-looked-at’. (Berger 2005).

Whilst drawing the city, I worked with fellow PhD researchers, Architect - Ogulbagt Charyyeva, Urban Planner - Alexandra Beldiman. We experienced the city using a phenomenological (sensory) methodology. By sharing our professional expertise and cultural backgrounds the outcomes were rich and diverse. We gathered important data in relation to design and progressive ideas for the city of Victoria. However, while we observed the city, Victoria contributed richly to our working partnership - by validating the importance of a collaborative working practice which spans across disciplines, cultures and countries.



Chess Urban Furniture” by Alexandra - Georgeta BELDIMAN

Cultivating Cultural Heritage in New Towns

Terrie Howey

This article intends to review the new city of Victoria, Brasov, Romania as regarded as a Utopian City, making it the subject of Utopian Cities Programmed Societies (Heinzel & Diminescu, 2019), a research week in late June 2019. The purpose of the week was to draw inspiration through research and seminars to tackle the issues facing the city as its population constantly shrinks in number. In this article compares Victoria to contemporary new town Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, England whose population has continually grown; and the challenges faced in constructing accessible cultural heritage in new towns.

Victoria in Brasov, Romania is a “new town” (a settlement which is planned and designed prior to construction with state funding, usually in a rural or uninhabited area. Many new towns are designed on utopian concepts of creating the perfect environment to house the perfect society). Heralded the city of pioneers, city of flowers and city of children, it was once a prosperous city providing well paid jobs. Yet, during an initial meeting with the Mayor and members of the city council the biggest issue was their ‘Shrinking city[1]’ populated by an ever-decreasing older population as the younger generations moved out of the city often to find work or higher education opportunities. It followed that the city council hoped for an investor to recognise the potential of the picturesque city set in the mountains as a tourist destination.

1 A phenomenon where the population of the city quickly reduces as people migrate from the city to other areas. This issue has been experienced in many cities in Romania after the fall of Communist regime.

This hope is built in no small part to the history of the town being founded by external investment in a munitions and later chemical factory on the edge of town. Starting off as a colony providing workers for the factory in the early 1940s the area became a city whilst Romania was under Soviet influence during the 1950s. The Mayor of Victoria stated that the city had no archive, whilst there are local maps chronically the area held at the city offices and a small museum room at the factory, it is not readily accessible without appointment.

Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, England is a new town. Heralded the city of pioneers[2], city of trees but it is also derided as a soulless place of concrete and roundabouts without heritage or cultural despite having areas of history and outstanding natural beauty with many parks, woodlands and lakes. It is regarded as the most successful new town in Britain due to its rapid (and still increasing) growth, its employment levels and buoyant economy. It was designated as a 'new city' in 1967 under the 1946 New Towns Act. After the initial planning period by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation (Llewelyn-Davies, Weeks, Forestier-Walker, & Bor, 1968, 1970) construction began in 1970 and continues to present day as the 'city' still increases. Milton Keynes' population rose from 44,000 in 1967 to 260,000+ in 2017. Milton Keynes includes 16 original settlements which can trace their origins back to the English Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods.

Both Victoria and Milton Keynes were designed along utopia philosophies to create a place that could maintain a happy and prosperous community but approached differently in their construction. Milton Keynes was planned to be a low-density city comprising of different areas each with its own distinct architecture and multiple industries as opposed to Victoria's single industry which as its needs for workers has lessened has impacted the local population. Victoria is split into two main types of housing, houses and apartment blocks, with high rise buildings around the edge of the town reducing in size towards the centre where the two storey houses are situated.

As relatively new settlements both Victoria and Milton Keynes have had to manage new populations making a connection to a new area. Both have had to cultivate a heritage, in Milton Keynes this has been through the a Heritage Consortium, made up of five heritage organisations[3], including the Living Archive (Living Archive, 2016) a collection of oral histories from local residents, whether original, pioneer, or more recent settlers. The oral histories include stories of everyday life to memories of extraordinary events and have inspired cultural events, plays, songs and poems about the area. Living Archive's oral collection, as opposed to a document or object archive involves the community increasing its visibility and accessibility to the communities it serves and can exist online accessible to residents and across the globe. These stories cultivate cultural heritage by and for the residents of Milton Keynes highlighting that storytelling can be both a form of heritage, known as intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2018), and a method by which to share it. Storytelling can generate understanding about an area beyond one's own experience, and by sharing personal experiences it can create bonds within the community. Milton Keynes has used its Living Archive to engage residents, gain funding, and produce cultural events, drawing in visitors from outside the city and by making many of its resources available online raises the profile of Milton Keynes. A similar project in Victoria could produce an archive, noted by the Mayor as lacking, engage in the residents, and provide accessible information to encourage potential tourism and the hoped-for investors.

To explore this potential during the research week in Victoria residents were engaged in interviews designed to encourage the sharing of oral histories and personal narratives. Even with the limited number of residents, there were plenty of stories about the area and the individual's experience of the area. Inspired by these stories, the landscape and Romanian folktales well known throughout the country a digital story (a two to three minutes of video combining a personal narrative with relevant images) was created (Howey, 2019) as a piece of cultural heritage and an artist's response to exploring the themes raised during the week. Interviews and digital stories such as the ones created during the research week, along with audio recorded oral histories could be collected to start an archive which could be continually added to and reflected upon. With smart phones readily available providing access to audio and visual recording and editing apps, a resource could be generated by the residents themselves without the need for a costly investment or space to hold an archive.

By comparing Victoria and Milton Keynes we see that new towns face certain challenges surround their cultural heritage regardless of the planning, population and politics underpinning the establishment of the area. A resource of digitally archived oral histories cultivating cultural history by the residents could be a fast and low-cost method for Victoria to develop an archive which would be globally assessible. This at least addresses the cited lack of an archive but may potentially draw outside attention to the picturesque city in the mountains creating further benefits regarding tourism and investment.

2 The original settlers to Milton Keynes are referred to as pioneers in response to the area having a lack of roads, infrastructure or facilities in the early part of its development, giving it a 'wild west'-like reputation (Croft & Mynard, 1993; Finnegan, 1998, 2007; Hill, 2005; Kitchen, 2018; Turner & Jardine, 1985).

3 The five organisations are Bletchley Park, Cowper and Newton Museum, Living Archive, Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre, Milton Keynes Museum.

References:

Agnew, J. (2011). Chapter 23: Space and Place John Agnew (University of California, Los Angeles) in J. Agnew and D. Livingstone (eds.). Handbook of Geographical Knowledge, 2011, ?? https://doi.org/10.5840/radphilrev20071022

Croft, R. A., & Mynard, D. C. (1993). The Changing Landscape of Milton Keynes. Aylesbury: Longdunn.

Finnegan, R. (1998). Tales of the City: A Study of Narrative and Urban Life. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Finnegan, R. (2007). The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town (2nd ed.). Wesleyan University Press.

Heinzel, T., & Diminescu, D. (2019). Utopian Cities Programmed Societies. Utopian Cities Programmed Societies. Victoria, Brasov, Romania: 2580 Association.

Hill, M. (2005). Milton Keynes: A history & celebration. Sailsbury: The Francis Frith Collection.

Howey, T. (2019). Sweet Victoria - Draga Victoria. Retrieved October 23, 2019, from YouTube website: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVu50q3CQKs&t=5s

Kitchen, R. (2018). Make No little Plans. England: Living Archive.

Kolodziejski, A. L. (2014). Connecting People and Place : Sense of Place and Local Action.

Living Archive. (2016). Living Archive | A living history of Milton Keynes. Retrieved July 13, 2019, from Living Archive website: https://www.livingarchive.org.uk/

Llewelyn-Davies, Weeks, Forestier-Walker, & Bor. (1968). Milton Keynes: Interim Report. London.

Llewelyn-Davies, Weeks, Forestier-Walker, & Bor. (1970). The Plan for Milton Keynes. London.

Milton Keynes Development Corporation. (1970). The Plan for Milton Keynes Volume Two. London.

Turner, J., & Jardine, B. (1985). Pioneer Tales. Stantonbury: People's Press.

UNESCO. (2018). Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Paris, France.

Photo Dance - A cultural heritage event 'day of dance' in Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. Credits: Terrie Howney.

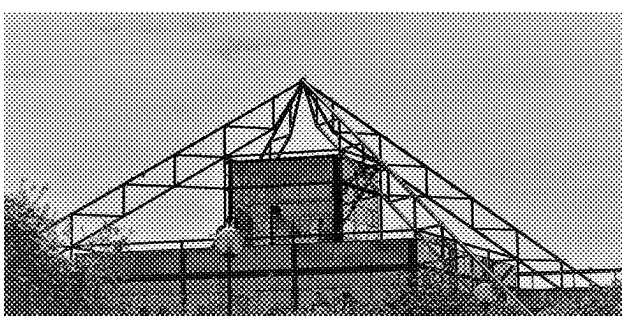


Photo Pyramid - A piece of modern architecture in the centre of Milton Keynes known as 'the point' because of its pyramid structure. It is at the centre of fierce cultural heritage debate as the town councillors plan to tear it down and many residents protest to keep it.

Map - The layout of Milton Keynes including the original settlements, this is from the Milton Keynes Development Corporation Plan, as referenced in the article.

Victoria – the workers club, the school. An excerpt from a filmmaking methodology

Irina Botea-Bucan and Jon Dean

Victoria - an excerpt from a filmmaking methodology

We came to Victoria in order to understand the particular intimacies of the former 'city of youth'. While our focus was mainly on the Cultural House, it soon became very obvious that there was a strong and complex connection between the Combinat (chemical plant), Cultural House and formal educational institutions (primary and secondary school, industrial high school). This project continues our ongoing research into the history, planning and everyday usage (collective and individual) of such institutions. Our methodology is based upon slowly developing a dialogue with past and present actors, participants, in Cultural Houses.

A general introduction into the Cultural Houses in Romania:

Throughout the 50-year period prior to December 1989, almost every city, town and village in Romania had a cultural centre, usually either called a Cămin Cultural or Casa de Cultură: so-called homely places or houses of culture. Their construction materialised the utopian dream of communism to create a communal place where everyone could be both engaged and simultaneously surveyed. No matter how remote or small a village, a local House of Culture, or Cultural Hearth, would be built there so that no-one would be left outside of 'official culture'. Arguably, throughout the national regions culturally diverse communities and individuals often appropriated these spaces in complex and contrasting ways.

Through their ubiquitous presence, a relatively large amount of state funding and sustained cultural programmes, these institutions played various and prominent roles for both the rural and urban populations during the period of 1955-1989; working alongside and often intersecting with wider state educational programmes and the industrial production sector.

Even though Cultural Houses are generally associated with the post-WW2 Communist Party of Romania (PCR) period the actual history and usage of these institutions have a much longer and diverse lineage that surpasses the localised and communist-era timeline and attributed ideology.

Two main entangled directions can be traced: early socialist ideas of the late 1800s and something of a liberal-sociological programme funded and supported by the state, that peaked in the 1930s.

The early socialist ideas coagulated in various political movements, strikes, newspapers, and ultimately in the formation of the Workers Party that initiated a number of Workers Clubs (Clubul Muncitorilor) and Houses of People (Casa Poporului) throughout Romania at the end of 1800s; evident in the main cities of Bucharest, Iasi, Ploiesti, Galati and Craiova.

Our research into these institutions is woven onto the premise that a re-learning of how to see, and possibly imagine, the subjective and collective experience of the so-called 'communist past' (referring to the period of 1945-1989) is necessary in order to deconstruct the multiple filters through which the visibility of Eastern Europe was constructed after 1989, which affects the present site-specific socio-political imagination, with its westernisation, or self-colonisation, tendencies.

Initial observations:

A city built upon a grid system, roses, architecture reminiscent of other places: Chandigarh, India, maybe? Very quiet, very few cars or other vehicles, mountain backdrop interrupted by the newly built church.

Large, international, supermarket chains have replaced and occupied the older Romanian state outlets.

Silence at dusk, promenading on both the main boulevard as well as towards the Combinat.

Signs and firms: "Fluoropolymers", "Recreation Area. Viromet Swiming Pools. Vacation Land"

Main boulevard with grand houses for the workers, planned and decorated efficiently. From the new church to the Workers Club that was renamed Casa de Cultura (House of Culture) just 2 years ago.

Municipal gardeners cleaning the streets at the break of dawn, cutting the grass, trimming the trees, a tractor breaks the silence… gradually, usefully, collecting the garden waste, a bicycle.

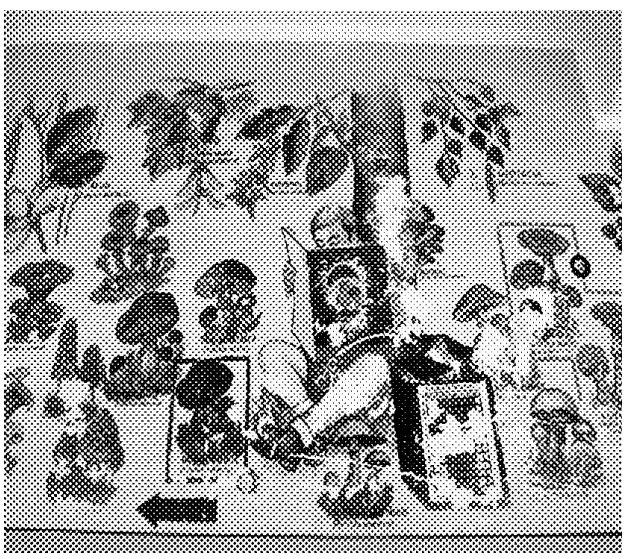
Central City Advertisement:

Come to us to Victoria 24th of August 11pm Fireworks Show

Victoria City's anniversary 23rd of August Friday

70th year anniversary of the young city

Everybody still refers to the Cultural House as the Club, reminiscence of its former name: The Workers Club. If the Chemical Plant known as Combinat would have still been functioning full blast, the name would have been kept. We/I prefer the Workers Club. It renders visible the connection with the late 1800s socialist history of the Workers Clubs in Romania, and highlights the Club component vs the stage, Performance Hall component.[1] Allocating more emphasis



1 Within the many different types and sizes of Cultural Houses (Union House of Culture, Student Houses of Culture, Youth Houses of Culture, rural Cultural Hearths) there is a certain unity of structure. All of the different models encompassed two main areas, delimitated by the two quite distinct functions: Sala de Spectacole (Performance Hall) and the Club. The Performance Hall which occupies the main and most important space in almost all of the Cultural Houses is fundamentally a theatre space/stage surrounded by seats, more or less a flexible space designed to accommodate either displays or presentations.

Whereas, the Club Room or area is comprised of much smaller spaces of varying dimensions, designed for participatory activities, formal lessons, rehearsals and workshops. Specific activities included:

and architectural (partitioned) space for the Club Rooms existed in tight connection to a functional transformation of the role of Cultural Houses… the dissemination and distribution of culture changed, witnessing the active encouragement of personal, social, and group participatory activities.

A central question is how do we meet with people so that they share their stories, memories and experiences of living in Victoria and discuss any relationship they may have with the House of Culture? How would these proposed meetings not only help us 'make sense' of Victoria, but also form part of a negotiated filmic methodology itself? Can people become central to the filmmaking process?

Fragmented Dialogues

... the students can make screws, here they learn how to use the welding tools...

Andrieana Ciornei: These are our beautiful Fagaras mountains. From east to west these are my coordinates in which I function.

Nicu Diminescu[2]: The Chemical Plant sustained the whole city, the stadium, the greenhouses.

Mia Diminescu:[3] Not just the city but also the surrounding villages.

Nicu Diminescu: In fact, the whole area. All of the workers were coming in buses to work in three shifts.

Mia Diminescu: The buses brought the workers from the villages.

Nicu Diminescu: I like the mountains first of all. I liked that it was an extremely young city and that meant dynamism. You could always quickly initiate things. There was an enthusiasm for new ideas and I wasn't bothered by the authorities so much. All of the parents were hired by the Combinat and a lot of the successful things I did for the school were made in the Combinat.

I wasn't paid as a football manager but rather they gave me everything I wanted for the school.

Mr. Dumitras: The initial building materials for the Sports Hall were recycled from the old Workers Club, which was opposite the bus station.

When I became the director I built this part; the changing rooms and viewing stands.

Of course this was done with money from the Combinat; but you still had to work for it.

Nelu Timofte, the music teacher: The Cultural House in Victoria was the place for culture.

It had a Performance Hall, library, cinema projections for days per week.

This is where collaborators from within the city and also outside would come.

This is where the future citizens of Victoria would be culturally formed.

Collaborations included the schools, hospital and the Combinat factory.

Talented people from different sections of the Combinat would come and had something to say... they created symposiums, gatherings and round tables for the well being of Victoria.

Nicu Diminescu: At the same time, we had very good relations with the forest conservationists. With the students we would collect hibiscus and other medical plants that we would donate. They would then give us materials that we needed for the school. This is how an organic exchange developed.

Nicu the Saxophonist: We had artistic brigades in the Combinat.

Nelu Timofte: It was an obligation for each sector of the Combinat to have a brigade.

They had engineers and technicians who were very talented writers; the writers would produce scripts that were then rehearsed at the Combinat; the performances were then shown at the Workers Club; the series of shows we called... Dialogues on the Same Stage.

... We were all script writers and directors...

Lili, Andreiana and Lenuta… sing the anthem of Victoria:

In the heart of the country there is a beloved city Victoria

A star from the blue sky

A flower from the infinite

We are mountain climbers

We roam through the mountains

We love our life

We know how to live it

And you the ones who love the mountains

Come to Victoria!

Andrieana Ciornei: Wow, how many emotions I had; my legs were shaking.

You could open the curtain wider and the stage was more open.

Here we did folk dancing, theatre plays and sang songs.

An actor from Brasov would come.

Virgil Rogozea: It should be like this! We should have cultural activities,

dance troupes, there are some actually.

Pop music, folk music, participatory circles for young and older people.

Nelu Timofte and Nicu the Saxophonist sing:

On the rivers of Mures and Tarnave

There is no-one I dislike

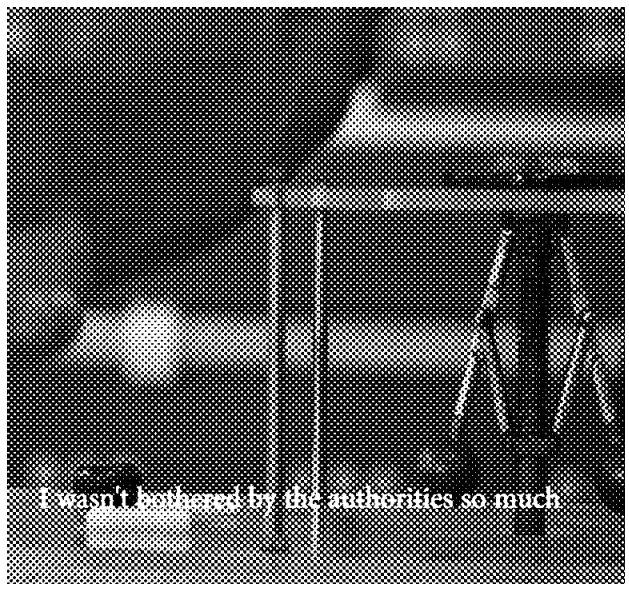
On the rivers of Mures and Tarnave

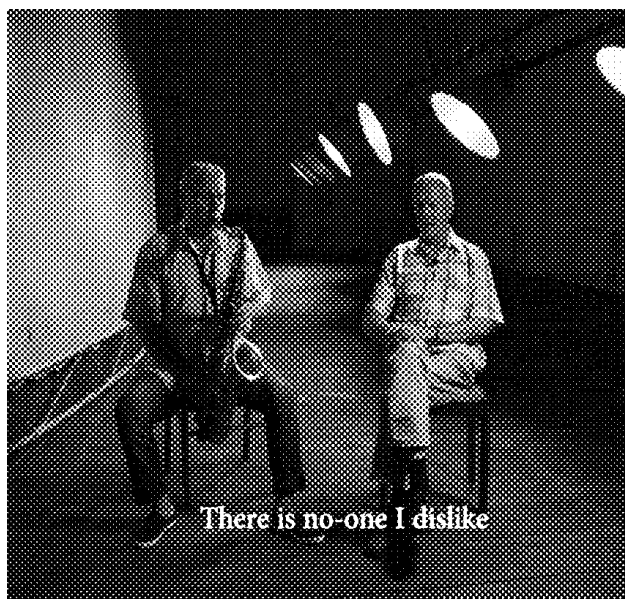
There is no girl that I love

On the river Mures and on the plain

There is no girl that I like

But, I don't care because my love is more beautiful and full of more love





visual arts, photography groups, cinema clubs, radio amateurs, music sessions, popular dance, ballet, conferences, technical activities, theatre and literary circles.

2 Nicu Diminescu, lives in Timisoara now. He lived in Victoria for 20 years and was the Director of the Primary and Secondary School in Victoria. The main author of a pedagogical experiment in the school which implied a special system of differentiated learning and experimental 3-way notation, he also introduced the idea and the practice of ecology in the area.

3 Mia Diminescu, lives in Timisoara now together with her partner Nicu Diminescu. She taught history and participated in the pedagogical experiment for 20 years.

Project on Victoria’s gardens

Andra Jurgiu & Oana Vasile (Atelier Bilc)

THE GARDENS OF VICTORIA

The aimless walks in the city of Victoria during the days of our first visit, took us to the large areas of gardens in the outskirts, where an organic web of beautiful pathways would eventually lead you out in the open field that surrounds the city.

In our continuous discovery of ever more and more gardens, this area revealed itself to us as an active field of unpredictable potential. We were mesmerized and intrigued.

OBSERVE:

The gardens amount to a 1:1 area ratio to the city and they draw an almost continuous green belt around it.

The main boulevards are dispersed into small streets which, passing through a membrane of garages, smoothly become sinuous pathways boarded by an endless variety of textures and degrees of transparency.

The experience of perpetual change in local atmosphere while walking through the gardens is an emergent effect of the creativity manifested in cultivating one’s garden and tending to one’s daily affairs. It seems as if a very specific know-how structures the generous amount of time and diligence they grant to the gardens.

TRACING LOCAL NARRATIVES:

As creativity is expressed trough different skills, we wondered what this skills are and were do they come from. This took us back to the founding of the city in the fifties, when people from all over the country, but especially from the surrounding villages, came to Victoria to build a new city, a new chemical plant and to start a new life. As it is manifested in the gardens, the ancestral skills of self-providing were embedded in their daily routine, as a form of incorruptible heritage that they brought with them.

This was then enhanced by a series of technical skills acquired from their new, highly technical and regulated jobs on construction sites and at the chemical plant.

The manifestation of these mixed skills can be traced in the layout of the gardens, the details of fencing, in plot arrangements on slopes or little bridges. With their incorruptible heritage and their new technical knowledge they managed to corrupt their present which was supposed to mark the birth of the “new man” and his modern lifestyle.

The web of pathways through the gardens is therefore an image of resilience and the proof that changing one’s context does not completely dismantle his traditional way of functioning. One does not become a blank reprogrammable machine on which a new lifestyle algorithm can be installed.

TAKING STOCK:

This resilience can be understood following the specific use of space and the specific use of time in the gardens as opposed to the normalized use of space and time in the city.

The programmed area of the city is in its nature so artificial that populating it was only possible by imposing strict rules and limitations on space use: from traffic signs and park enclosures to the flat assignment system.

This overregulated city then fades out into the gardens that are the result of exclusively local negotiation of rules and limits, in the absence of any property titles.

Any conflict here can only be solved following its own momentum without referring it to a higher hierarchical instance like a civil code or a set of building regulation. When someone’s vine doesn’t grow properly because it is shaded by a neighbor’s high walnut tree, the solution can only come through a bona fide quarrel.

People not only negotiate with each other on space, but they also have a special kind of time use following and negotiating with natural rhythms: night/day, summer/winter, and rain/drought. In this way of resonating with plants and fowls temporal patterns, the time spent in the gardens becomes an experiential time which is different from the artificially normalized time use particular to the city.

Nature has not only recurring time patterns but also exceptional events that the garden people are responsive to. After a summer hailstorm we met a lady that came to her garden in the middle of the day to check wether the storm had messed up the beanstalk grid, in order to rearrange it and tie again the plants.

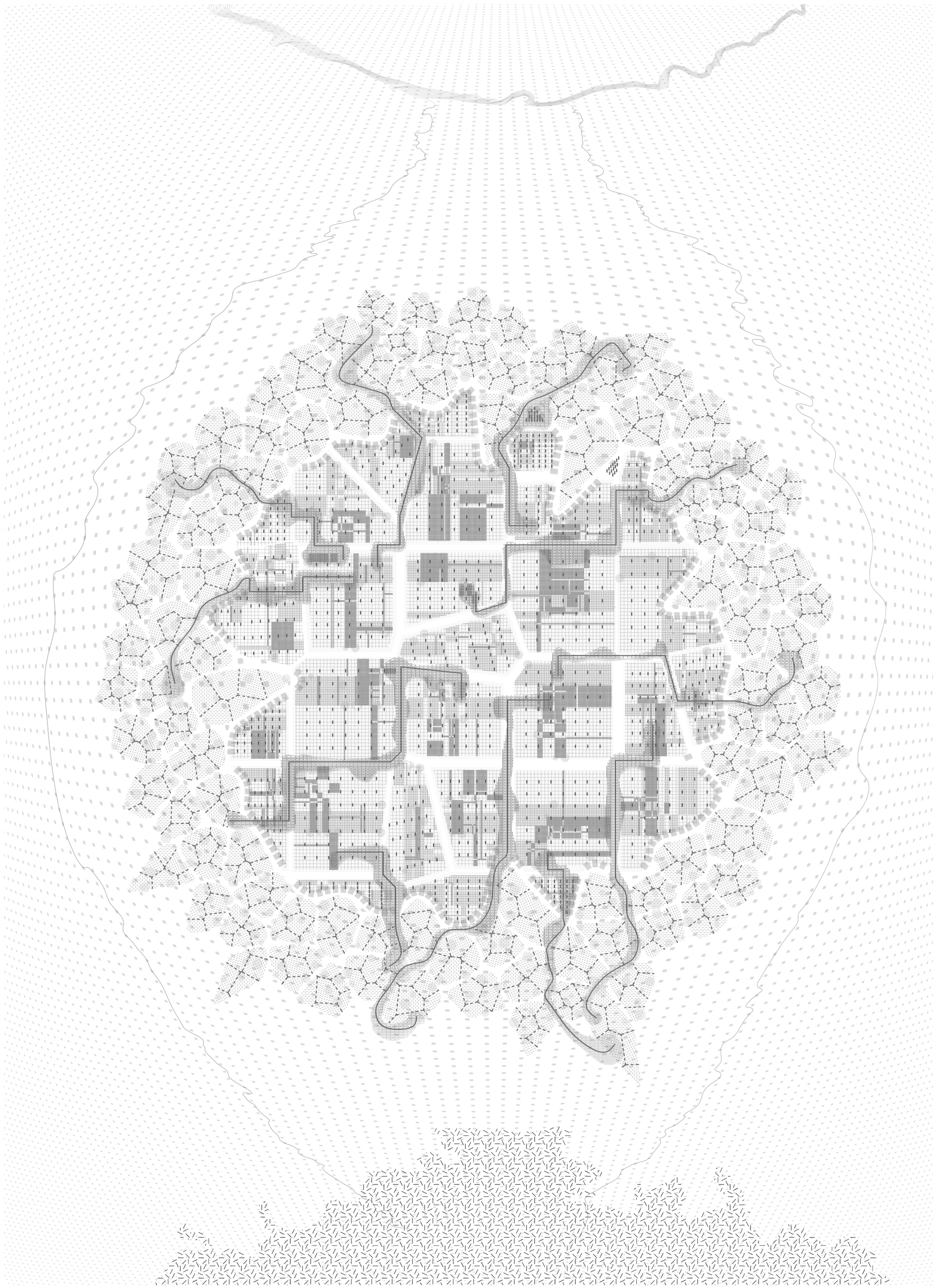
The continuous practice of gardening and the time invested here created what we like to call a territory of materialized spatial practice that is somewhat uniform but alive: changing, expanding, disappearing and evolving. Sometimes you will see the same kind of wooden pole used, in a line on the limits of the garden, for building the garden fence and also, on a grid in the middle of the garden, for holding up the tomato plants. Space form and space use are equally visually present here.

PROVOKE:

The quotidian life unfolds in a back and forth motion between the normalized and the experiential spheres. This motion draws a sort of expended house hold. Fragments of the programmed city are thus appropriated in an unusually familiar manner and connected to the gardens. We identified this overlaid yet highly present link as the constitutive structure of the present city of Victoria.

The gardens of Victoria were for us the key of understanding its past and current dynamics. Can they also be the key for its future?

We see a project for Victoria as a form of continuous research on augmenting the local narratives by designing a process of gradually engaging the community. This process should be able to eventually overwrite current policies of space use in the programmed city by expending the negotiating practices specific to the gardens. Any architectural gesture needed in pursuing this scenario would then only come as a mere media for spatial happenings.



L’inoccupée (2019)
Céline Berger – film stills

Ecologies of Victoria

Pauline Vierne

Acknowledgments:

I started this project, which is published as a work in progress, during the Summer Camp on ‘Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies’ taking place June 2019, in Victoria, Romania.

My approach was strongly informed by the infrastructure research project CHT/Totalism <1> (Lanzarote, Canary Islands), with whom I have been collaborating with since mid-2018, and where I have spent the winter of 2018-2019. While my involvement in the project taught me about digital tools for knowledge organisation <2>, novel systems of representation <3> and the establishment of a tactical nomadic infrastructure <4>, it also gave me a wider theoretical framework to practice critical thinking <5>. Performing research outside of traditional institutions and often being confronted to the lack of basic infrastructures in these locations (access to water or absence of Wifi) has refocused my rather ‘hands-on’ material designer approach, towards attempting to share holistic understanding of events, such as ecocide; the mass anthropogenic impact on natures.

Context :

a lake, a chemical industry and a culture of ecology

The scenery of the Balea Lake is located at 2034m in the Fagaras Mountains, South Carpathians. It is accessible by car and bus via the breath-taking Transfagarasan road, and is an outstanding tourist site in the heart of Romania. Day tours are available <6> and a chalet, directly by the lake, also offers activities and food for visitors <7>.

The city of Victoria, built after a Soviet regime and erected in the middle of a forest, has long existed for the purpose of the chemical factory established there in 1939. Despite the overall effort of the city and its infrastructures to train perfect workers for the factory during the communist era, in the 1960s a special class on ecology at the Liceul Teoretic was created and directed by Nicolae Diminescu. He later became active in several political movements, promoting ecology all over Romania. The educational programme included: excursions to the nearby mountains for students to birdwatch, to create

inventories of insects, plants and small animals, as well as the practice of taxidermy and the painting of educational frescoes at the school.

The group called ‘Floare de Colt’ (Edelweiss club) formed by the Professor and his students proudly achieve the building of a mountain shelter, or ‘Cabana’, during this period (later destroyed).

In the light of contemporary practices, I understand this club as a group of volunteers, ecologists, potential activists, and an East European vanguard of today’s ‘citizen science’. Defined as “scientific research conducted, in whole or in part, by amateur (or nonprofessional) scientists, citizen science is sometimes described as ‘public participation in scientific research,’ [...] whose outcomes are often advancements in scientific research, as well as an increase in the public’s understanding of science”. <8>

In times of illegal and violent deforestation threats in the country <9>, I believe this historic initiative has shaped an original mindset, that should be fostered to face ecological contemporary challenges.

Ecological-Hacker mindset | the application of the CHT/Totalism nature-culture principles

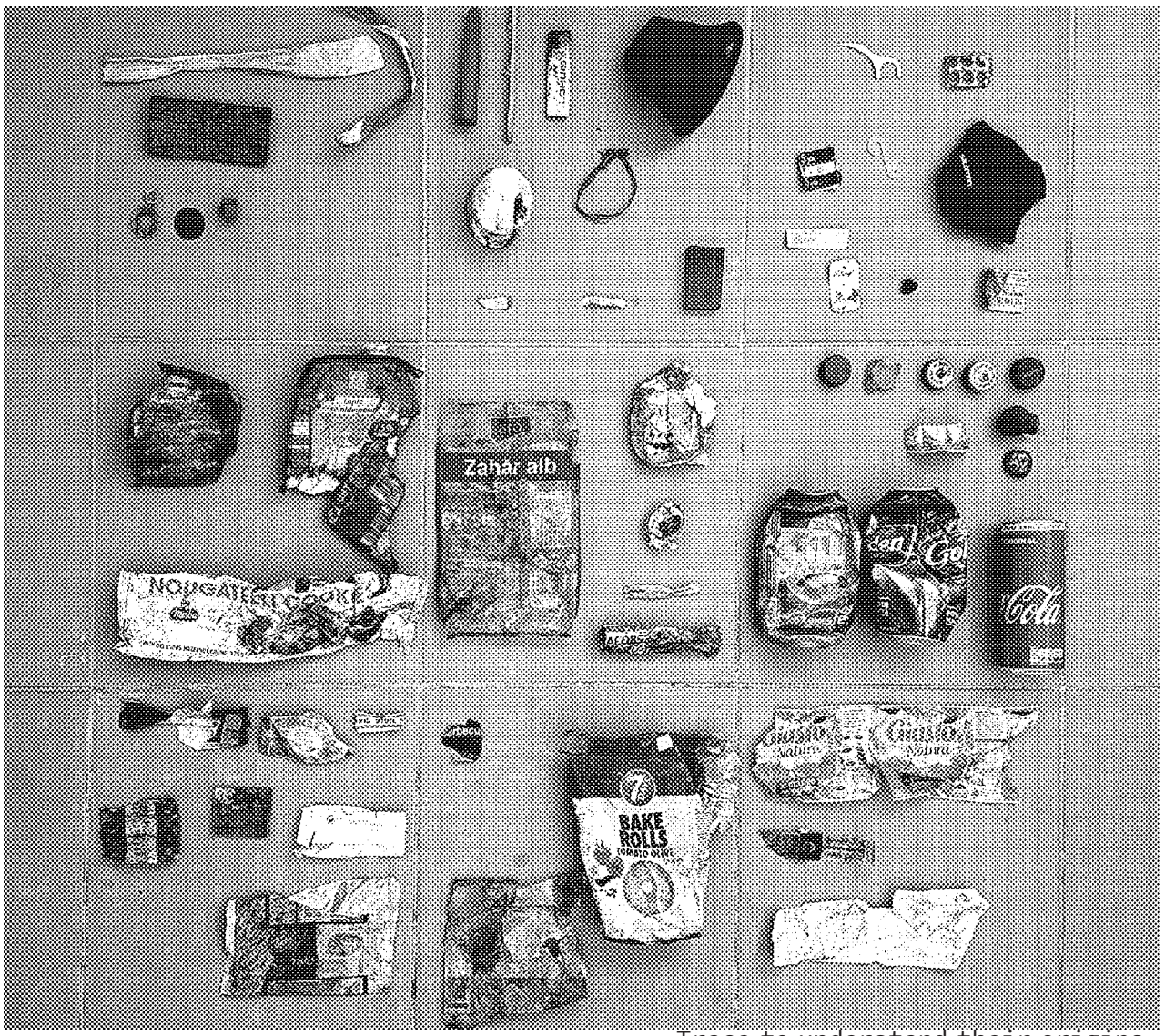
Since 2014, CHT is organising temporary, experimental off-grid desert camps, so living in natural environments, several times per year. <1> Systematising garbage collection in nature has been practiced, reflected and protocolised at CHT camps since 2016’s CHT4-C. <10> Within CHT protocols, discarded items present important visual clues to decode the local life.

My project in Victoria aims at practicing, extending and contributing to the CHT protocol for environmental activism. <11>

Statement:

The method we put in practice is based on the observations of a visible phenomenon: waste in natural sites.

Deceptive from first sight, unpleasant in the natural context, even unexpected in a “preserved” area, we have to face it as a fact: waste is spread all over the world, left or brought there, by human activities, industrially or individually, or through wind and water streams. Surely, gathering waste in order to take it out of sight is an important action: ‘this is a civic gesture’ one will hear. Several initiatives on sea coasts are active and seeking for volunteers, such as Spanish brigades <12> and the international network of Precious Plastic. <13> In the case of objects found on a beach or swimming in the oceans, their origins, blurred by streams, are undoubtedly more challenging to identify. By opposition, in a relatively closed and remote ecosystem as the example of Balea Lake, we can assume that plastic wrappers and the like were brought by local human activities linked to tourism. Once we know the origins of a plastic object, we can also start to imagine its recycling and repurposing life cycle. It is true for the textile industry, as currently researched by



IKEA and H&M <14>, and obvious in the rich and diverse world of plastic types. <15>

Applied protocol at Lake Balea <11>

*** Be an active visitor.**

Consider your time spent in the given place, and what you do there.

== Within one hour of the visit, I would have liked to enjoy a short hike around the lake, but...

*** Observe, research, rethink, and reconstruct a nature-culture logic**

There will always be a set of different and somewhat inconsistent interactions, aim to curate them.

== While something in this place appeals to nature lovers and eco-tourism, directly on the parking lot, several stalls with goodies are open.

*** In direct contact, collect things that should not be here**

So the obvious man-made objects, non-biodegradable litter and waste...

== I collected the garbage, within my reach, lying in the lake and around it.

*** Engage both with locals, and tourists/visitors.**

Share practices, raise awareness, question habits.

== I engaged with other visitors while some would rather look away from the exposed trash.

*** Consider the provenance of things**

Trace to understand their origins.

== detailed in “decoding” below, and to be pursued.

---

a more exhaustive inventory is accessible online <16>

*** Make something out of it**

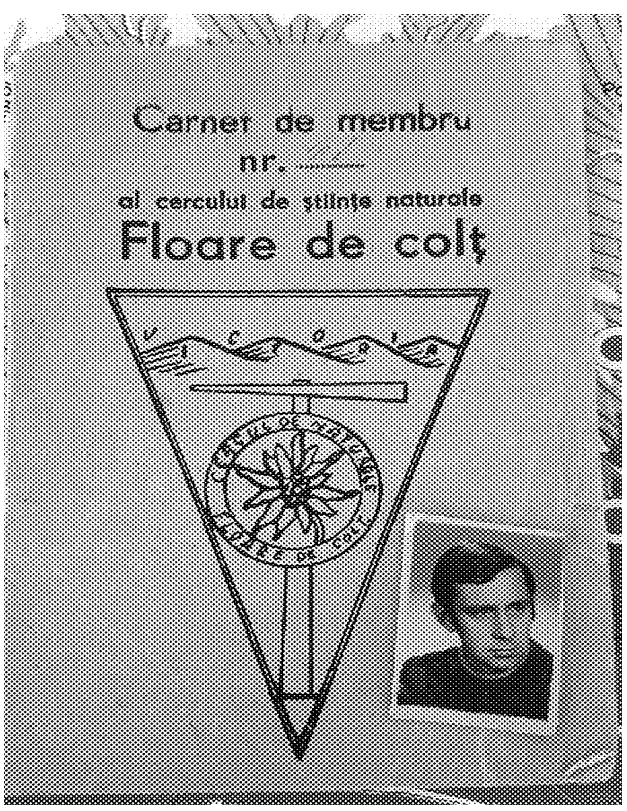
Document, exhibit, ...

== this article, online documentation and further investigations.

Decoding: What do people do at Balea Lake?

This speculation is based on waste found in the lake or in the grass and the CHT protocol applied to them.

They enjoy the view, maybe take a walk around, and also...



EAT:

* Their picnic -> aluminium foils

* Sweets -> candies, cookies and ice creams wrappers

DRINK:

* A coffee bought at the nearby café -> small plastic cups

* Possibly with milk in it -> very damaged milk packages, also special ones for kids

* Sugar -> individual packages and large plastic

* A beer or a cola -> cans in various states of degradation

* Liquids from plastic bottles -> bottle tags and caps

FLOSS:

* With a floss pick

SMOKE:

* A broken lighter

* Several cigarette butts <17>

Tourists commonly like to buy souvenirs and right there are semi-permanent stalls displaying shiny plastic jewellery, sliced agate geodes and mountain cheeses...local and international goods are presented side by side. What comes from afar needed to be wrapped in protective materials, such as the ones found at the bottom of the lake:

* pieces of white polystyrene

* large strong plastic sheets

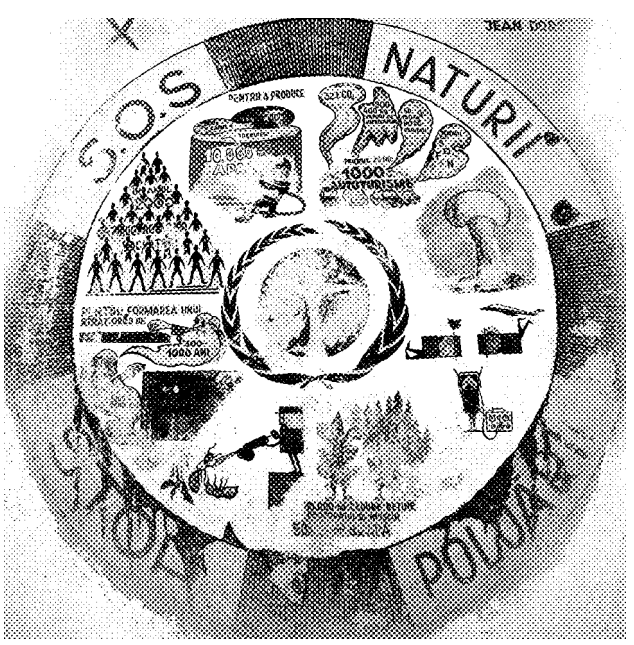
To make for a welcoming atmosphere, the chalet, where people enjoy the view and a café, is decorated with green plants:

-> A price tag for a plant in a ceramic pot was found in the mud

* Distributed by Carrefour Romania

* Originally from the Netherlands

== Drawing a tentacular network of production, distribution and logistics where economics, politics and societies



are actors.

Ecology and politics, a desirable future?

As the notion of Anthropocene is being scientifically acknowledged <18>, and the impact of humans' activities on the planet and its environmental degradation recognized, I want to evoke the paradigm of the 'consumer's power'. While it let us imagine that we are all actors of change, I believe this tendency to be mostly fooling the conscious citizens by hiding the decisive role and responsibility of big corporations in the current ecocide. Ecological culpabilities, recycling stress, avoiding taking a flight or two, and so many other little daily things <19> that we actually have to do at our personal scale to save the planet, or so are we told to. Unfortunately, it still appears that the (real) powerful actors are the ones who:

* Create industrial and chemical waste and pollution <20>,

* Emit large amounts of CO2, such as international logistics networks for goods transportation <21>,

* Practice economical lobbying upon political power <22>

* Evade state taxes; typical for multinational corporations

In an attempt to formulate my desired vision for the future of our humanity on Earth, with regards to the impact of humans' activities and specifically the production of objects, food and plastics, I encountered the 'Ecosocialist Manifesto' <23> and here I quote:

*** an extract of their position:**

'Acting on nature and its ecological balance, the [capitalist] regime, with its imperative to constantly expand profitability, exposes ecosystems to destabilizing pollutants, fragments habitats that have evolved over aeons to allow the flourishing of organisms, squanders resources, and reduces the sensuous vitality of nature to the cold exchangeability required for the accumulation of capital.'

*** their direction:**

'The goal [of ecosocialism] is a transformation of needs, and a profound shift toward the qualitative dimension and away from the quantitative. From the standpoint of commodity production, this translates into a valorization of use-values over exchange-values—a project of far-reaching significance grounded in immediate economic activity.'

Finally, in tribute to the Edelweiss Club's mountain chalet, I read the book 'Nos cabanes', written by Marielle Macé and I quote these simple words that resonate as a code of conduct for me:

'Face the world - Inhabit differently - Enlarge it'

REFERENCES

1 = Main website entry https://totalism.org

2 = E2h software https://totalism.org/E2H

3 = Research project on representation systems https://totalism.org/representation

4 = CHT base tech-tree https://totalism.org/tech-tree

5 = Shared knowledge and background https://totalism.org/commonground

6 = For example https://toursinbrasov.com/tours/visit-balea/

7 = Official website http://balealac.ro/en/home/

8 = Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizen_science

9 = BBC article, 21Oct 2019, on murdered rangers in Romanian forest http://bit.do/rangers_romania

10 = 2016 camp https://totalism.org/season4-C

11 = Protocol at https://totalism.org/in-nature

12 = https://www.terracycle.com/es-ES/brigades/programa-de-reciclaje-de-plasticos-en-playa

13 = For example in Canary Islands https://www.facebook.com/PreciousPlasticCanarias/ or in Greece https://www.facebook.com/PreciousPlasticGreece/

14 = Online article, 17.Oct 2019, on fabric recycling research by H&M and Ikea http://bit.do/fabric_recycling

15 = List https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plastic_recycling

16 = Balea collected waste list https://totalism.org/site-balea

17 = Considered the most common litter found on Earth according to https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4307979/

18 = As explained at https://editors.eol.org/eoearth/wiki/Anthropocene#Evidence_for_the_Anthropocene

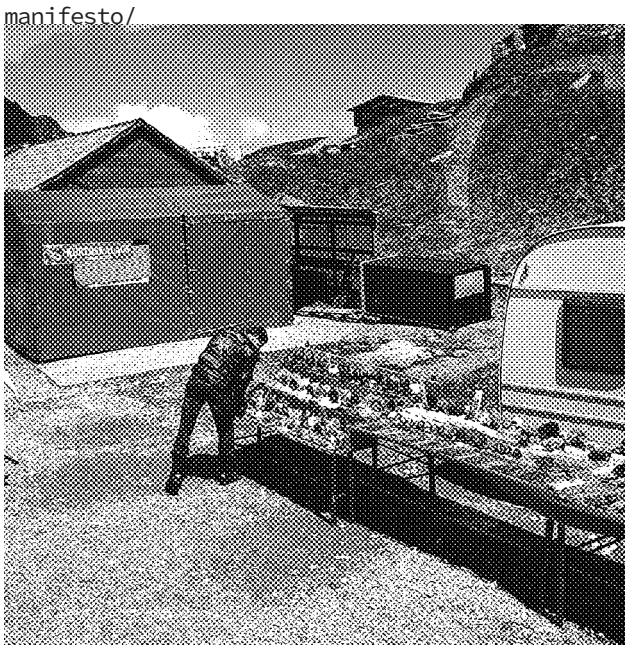
19 = Online article, 15.Oct 2019, on ecology and consumers' choices https://grozeille.co/lecologie-de-la-carte-bleue

20 = See list at https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-top-10-polluting-industries-in-the-world.html

21 = Research published in 2012 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268603205_Logistics_and_Its_Environmental_Impacts

22 = As illustrated for agro-chemistry in the TV series "Jeux d'influence", by Jean-Xavier de Lestrade, on ARTE, in July 2019

23 = Full manifesto at https://www.cnsjournal.org/about/an-ecosocialist-manifesto/



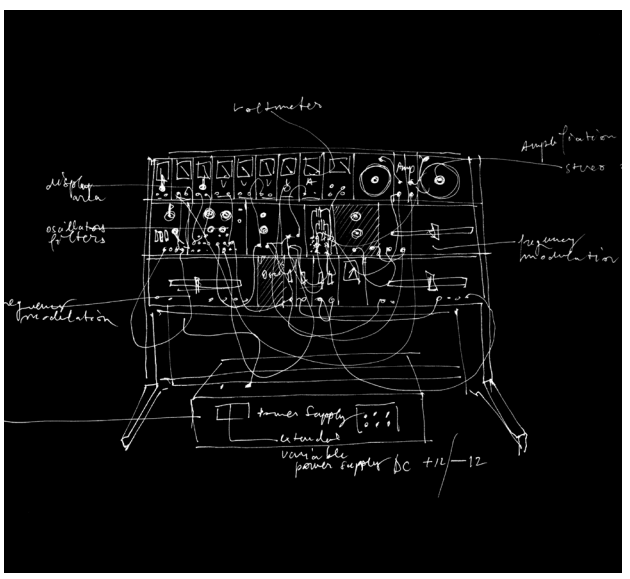
Gloria-Victoria, archive - future inquiry 2019

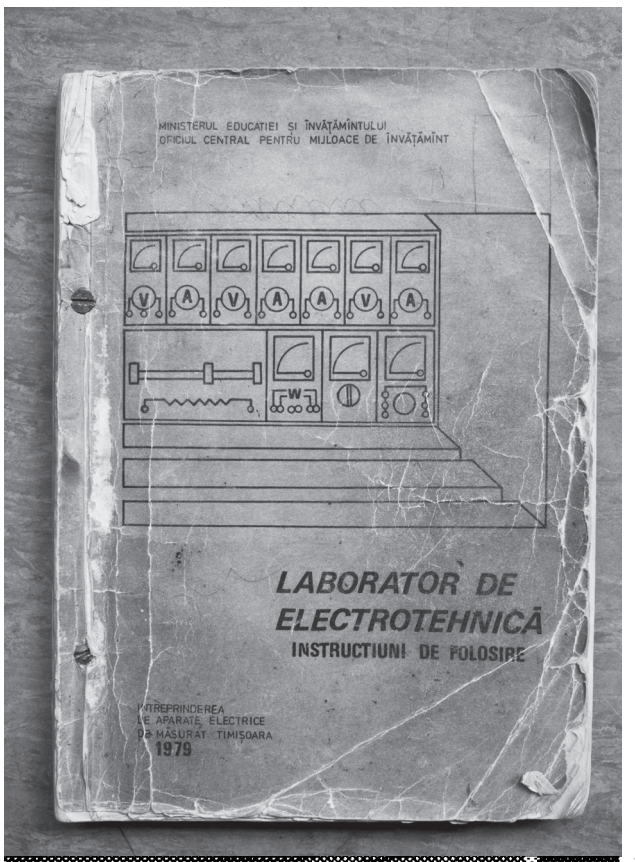
Ioana Vreme Moser

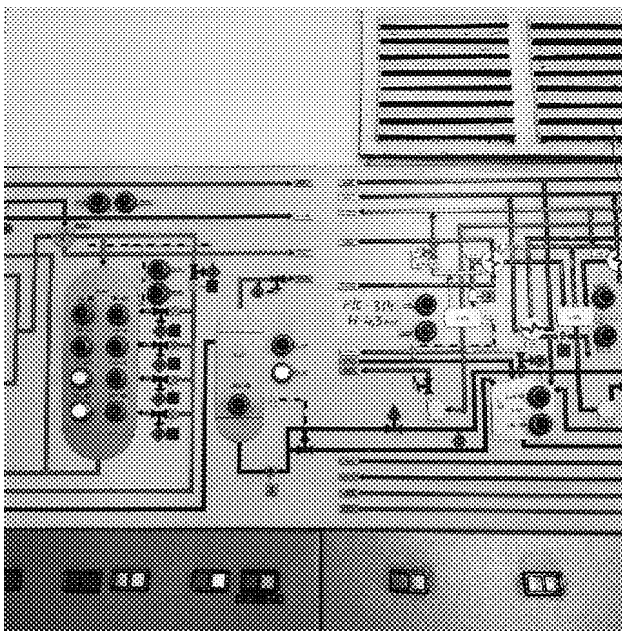
Upon investigating local circuitry and machinery, the didactic modular panels of the Industrial School of Victoria are imagined to be refurbished and converted together with the students into a series of sound-generating devices. The resulting gizmos will use the basic functionality of each industrial, chemical process as a premise for building specific sound circuitry. The modified modules are to be presented together with the students in a collective sound-noise performance next year.

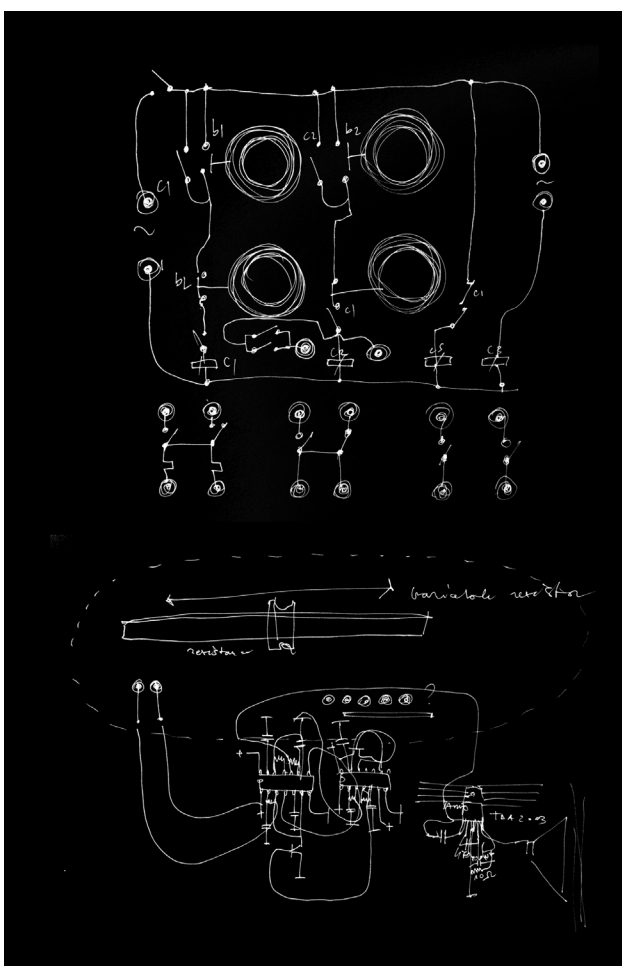
This industrial high-school lays with its impressive workshops and machinery; there is even an electronic laboratory where students are introduced into control room electronics. Currently, there are a few classes of students left and the laboratories are mostly out of use.

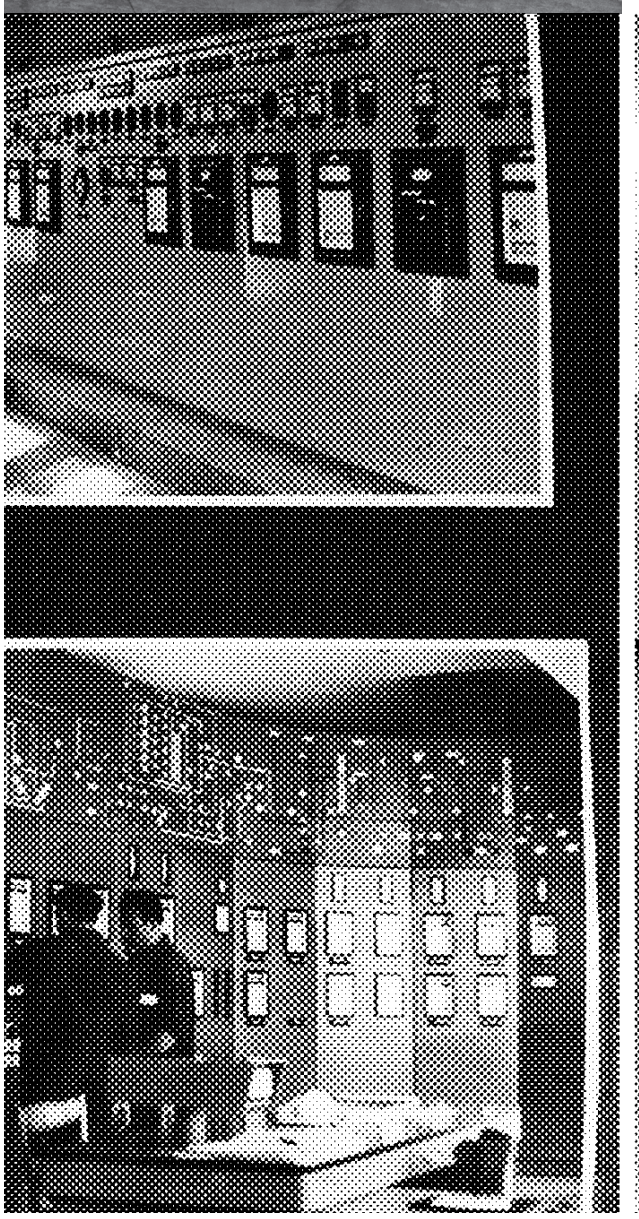
The project proposes to archive, preserving parts of these stagnating laboratory machines, regarding them as precious artefacts from a concluded era. It also wishes to re-contextualise these anachronous technologies, presenting them to the remaining students in a series of workshops so that they can be re-invented.

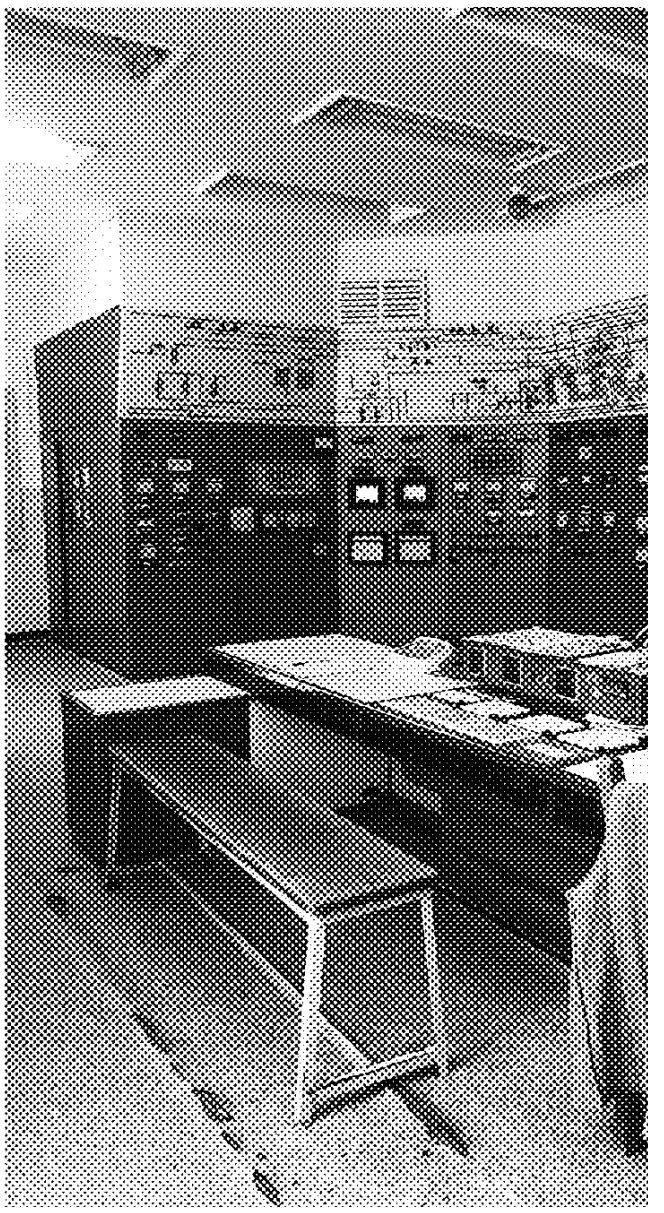












‘Melting Rust’ audio-visual performance

Anne Sarah Le Meur

- **‘Melting Rust’**, audiovisual performance, 30 minutes
Image 3D live by Anne-Sarah Le Meur and music improvised by Jean-Jacques Birgé
https://vimeo.com/364481709

- **‘To Victoria’**, 7 pictures, Victoria, August 2019

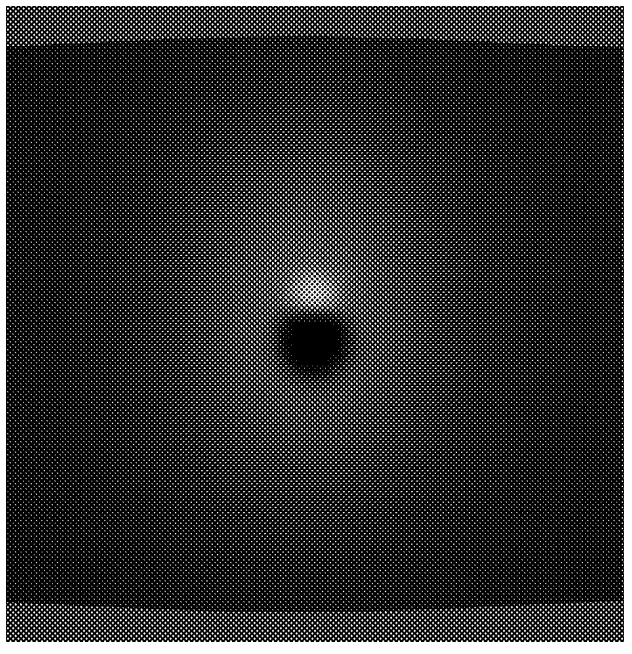
Before flying to Victoria in Transylvania, I was dreaming of this city which had been formerly at the forefront of petrochemicals, but that had since been ravaged by various accidents and explosions. My dream melted with my love for deliquescent worlds, visions sometimes captured with photography. Abandoned zones, neglected tiny areas, transient disorders, dusty dead flowers, ragged walls, rusty metals, tired paintings... So many wonderful stains and textures that no one ever notices. Fibers and dust of a shared world that breaks before coming alive again.

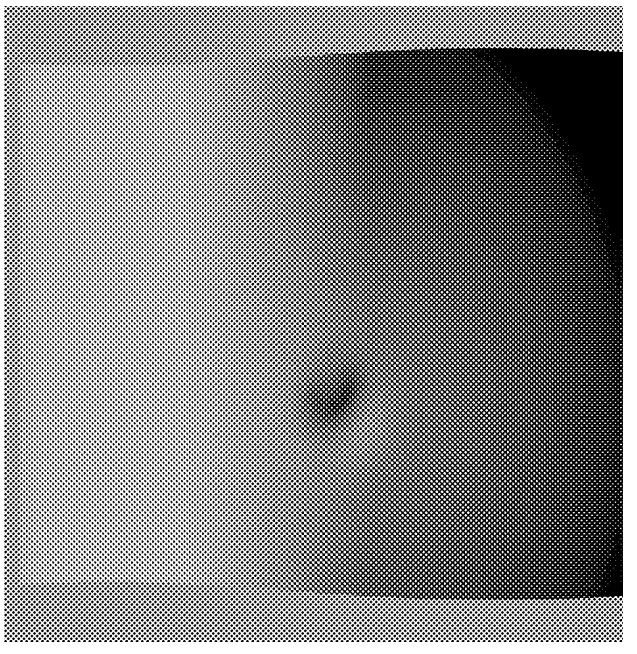
Metaphors, allegories, transpositions... Colours made the link. In my 3D images of unrealistic luminous phenomena, at this time there were unfinished, isolated sequences which were waiting for something to happen. Among the blue-green passage, suggesting nature and peace, even hope, I added a purple counterpoint. Among the fuchsia-red, which symbolises joy, happiness, exuberance, rises an acolyte grass green. These contrasts disturb a too calm harmony. And as always, my original black spot, base of my approach to virtual lights, appears, then hides momentarily. It slowly wtaches over the group. Ambivalent : is it a black hole, a shadow, a pupil? Sometimes it rocks a bright nugget inside itself, in a dialogue of potential opposites. For the performance Melting Rust in Victoria, I mostly built colorful progressions and worked the hues of the backgrounds : red or orange (rust, great goddess from the apocalypse). After an initial dark background - nourishing and beloved darkness - coloured backgrounds (grey then red, black again, then orange) accentuated the tragic element of the scenario. The slowness, and sometimes the accelerations, the waving or oscillating movements, the associations of opposing colours in concentric or slightly off-centre round forms, fascinate, amaze and worry alternately.

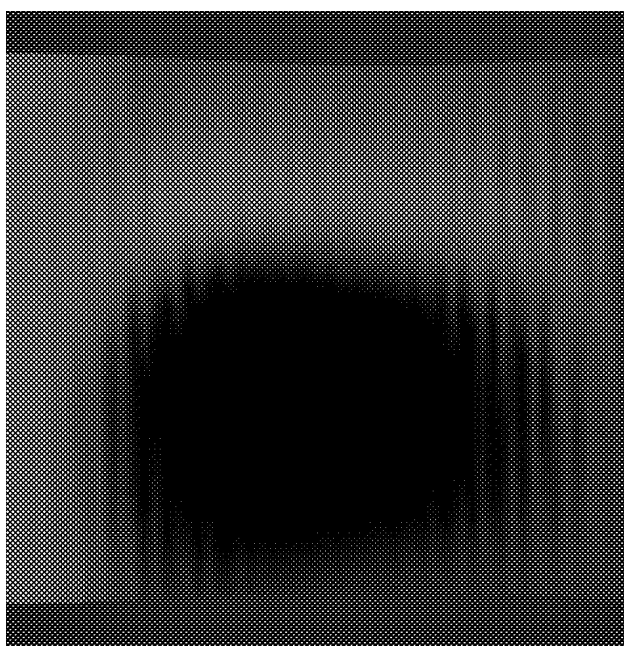
In the meantime, Jean-Jacques Birgé (composer) and I spent some time to explore connections between my images and his sounds, so he would know which sounds I would like or not in connection to my work. Jean-Jacques Birgé did not want to rehearse at all probably because he is a ‘master’ in music improvisation that never repeats himself. In desesperation, I gave him at least two important constraints: to introduce a few silences and to have some counterpoints or discordances, so that the sound did not necessarily illustrate or repeat the pictures, neither diminish their visual openness. Fortunately, we had for long time already agreed on the necessary dialogue or ‘non synchronism’ between media!

During my stay in Victoria, I gleaned some parts of its life, whether they were marked by the chemical dramas of an exhausted technology, or by the mere passage of time. Besides the completion of the performance, two compositions eventually emerged. My eyes on the buildings of the city or the factories, then in the room of the hotel, extend my artistic work. My digital images, abstract, smooth, with intense colors (timeless perhaps? purified by numbers ?), find another resonance through the close-ups of damaged materials from the concrete world. They appropriate this time that incarnates itself.

The window is wide open. The light curtains rustle slightly. The bed is undone. In the early twilight, a silhouette appears on the edge of the frame (presumably the photographer). Diaphanous under the sun, perceived in the reflection of the window in the mirror, the nature seems far away.







PARTICIPANTS
Bios

Atelier Bilc is a recently created identity that hosts the occasional collaboration between a group of independent artists and architects. Andra Jurgiu and Oana Vasile, the authors of this project, are architects and they have been working together on university projects, design competitions and cultural projects since 2011.

Marcelo Andreguetti is a Brazilian graphic designer with a journalism background, which makes him a sucker for magazines, editorial design, infographics and data. Currently he is trying to cross the bridge to the world of digital interfaces with his Masters at KISD, by using data to inspire new forms to visualize the phenomenon of micro-mobility and its effects on the public space.

Irina Botea Bucan (b. Ploiesti, Romania) has developed an artist-educator-researcher methodology that consistently questions dominant socio-political ideas and centralizes human agency as a vehicle for meaning . Performance, reenactment, simulated auditions, elements of direct cinema and cinéma vérité are combined in her artistic approach; negotiating and navigating the filmmaking process wherein performers are equal participants.Recent shows and screenings include: 55th Venice Biennale; International Film Festival Rotterdam; National Gallery Jeu de Paume, Paris; MNAC-National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest; Mystetskyi Arsenal, Kiev; Columbia University, City of New York.Irina is currently teaching at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and pursuing a PhD at Goldsmiths University in London. https://www.irinabotea.com

Céline Berger is a french artist living in Cologne, Germany. She graduated from the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne in 2012 and has been a resident at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, Amsterdam, in 2012-13. She received the Nam June Paik Newcomer Award in 2012. http://www.celineberger.com

Alexandra Beldiman comes from Bucharest, Roumania and graduated from UAUIM - Ion Mincu University of Urbanism and Architecture Bucharest, with a Master's degree in Urban Design - " The Reality of Utopian Cities", and is now a PhD student at the Urbanism School of Ion Mincu University of Urbanism and Architecture Bucharest with the thesis named " Shrinking cities - A specific phenomenon of urban dynamics". Alexandra was the captain in several art competitions, where she won the I, II, IIIrd places as National or Olympics prizes. Alexandra plans to pursue a career in design thinking.

Tobias Bieseke was born in Kassel. He has been a student in the Film & Sound program at the FH-Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts since 2008. He is currently working as a research assistant at the Dortmunder U, where he studies digital visual worlds and their interactions with sound and space. In 2017 he successfully completed his Masters studies and started to work as a scientific assistant at the kiU. Since November 2018 he is a PhD candidate at the KHM in Cologne. https://www.khm.de/personen_studierende/id.4467.tobias-bieseke/

Jean-Jacques Birgé At once music composer and sound designer, writer and blogger, film director and multimedia author, improviser and specialist of real-time synthesis instruments, artistic director and record producer , multi-awarded Jean-Jacques Birgé conceives a passion for images and sounds, and particularly for their potential to produce sense and create emotions. http://drame.org/2/

Silviu Borș is an architect and a Phd student at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Department of Architecture, with a thesis concentrating on the heritage of spa-towns, focusing on the particular case study of Sîngeorz-Băi.

Jane Cook is a Fine Artist who has exhibited Internationally and specialises in Drawing, Painting and Printmaking. She lives in the UK and teach at Loughborough University, School of Design and Creative Arts. Currently she is completing a fully funded practice led PhD at Loughborough University, which explores the notion of home, homeliness and dwelling.

Jon Dean (b. Wolverhampton, England) has been working in the field(s) of community-based participatory arts and adult learning for over thirty years. A diverse and extensive professional career has witnessed Jon developing and delivering community arts/educational programmes across both England and Romania. Throughout his career, Jon has worked within a range of public services, including: education, health, play, outdoor learning, social services, youth and community art spaces. Jon also creates independent (cross-platform/film) artwork that symbiotically relates to a community arts methodology.

Sukanya Deepak Sukanya is a Graphic Designer and Design researcher from India, currently based out of Cologne. Germany. She is interested in understanding how our culture and environment shapes our behaviours and thought processes. Email: sukanyadeepak@gmail.com

Dana Diminescu is born in Victoria. She is a sociologist and Professor at Institut Polytechnique de Paris. She is known for her work on the "connected migrant", and for a number of epistemological and methodological innovations in her research, questioning classical theories in migration studies. In particular, she designed and co-ordinated the e-Diasporas Atlas, which was first runner up of its category for the 2012 Digital Humanities Awards.

Tincuta Heinzel is an artist, designer and researcher. She completed her PhD in 2012 at Paris 1 University (France) with a thesis on electronic and reactive textiles' aesthetics. Under what she labels as "aesthetics of imperceptibility," Tincuta investigates the aesthetic issues of nano-materiality and design's new roles as operator between scales. She initiated, curated, and or coordinated several projects, such as "Artists in Industry" (Bucharest, 2011-2013), "Haptosonics" (Oslo, 2013) or "Repertories of (in)discreetness" (Budapest - Bucharest 2013-2015). She is presently a senior lecturer at Loughborough University in the UK. www.textiltronics.com

Terrie Howey is a Storyteller (known as Red Phoenix) and PhD researcher at Loughborough University investigating: storytelling as intangible cultural heritage impacting the sense of place of residents of the new town of Milton Keynes. Her current research challenges the popular conception of Milton Keynes as a place lacking in heritage and regards how these commonly repeated narratives effect the mindset of residents of the New Town and their 'Sense of Place'. To complement her research Terrie wrote the Buckinghamshire Folk Tales, published through the History Press in 2019, as a collection of folk stories connected to the landscape of Milton Keynes and the surrounding area. http://www.redphoenixstory.com/

Anna Vera Kelle is a theatre maker producing plays for young as well as adult audiences at different theatres among Germany. She studied theatre directing in Frankfurt (Main), was employed as an assistant directress at Staatstheater Hanover for two years and now works as a freelancer since 2016. She is associated with Theater Strahl, a theatre for a young audience based in Berlin and is currently doing the Master's program „Play && Object" at HfS „Ernst Busch" Berlin which focuses on digital media and participation in theatre.

Denisa Kera is a philosopher and designer experimenting with creative strategies of public engagement in science and technology. She spent the last decade as an Assistant Professor at the National University of Singapore, Visiting Assistant professor in Arizona State University, and she is currently a Marie Curie Senior Fellow at the University of Salamanca. https://asu.academia.edu/DenisaKera

Friedrich Kirschner is a theatre director and software developer. He uses game structures and technology for participatory performances and interactive installations. He is currently head of the MA Spiel und Objekt at the University of Performing Arts Ernst Busch in Berlin.

Matthew de Kretser is an interdisciplinary designer focusing on sustainability and social equality, particularly in education and early childhood development. He is currently doing his MA at Köln International School of Design. Email: matthew.dekretser@gmail.com

Anne-Sarah Le Meur was born in 1968, France, started to create artistic abstract 3D images in 1990. Focusing on exploring programming language and plastic space features, she generates singular moving and fixed images, once interactive. She is represented by Galerie Charlot, Paris. http://aslemeur.free.fr

Elena Lohmann, Vincent Bertran, Tamara Bertran are MA students at KISD Cologne (Germany).

Karin Lingnau is an artist, researcher and curator with a focus on materiality, digitality and fiction. Her work addresses the multiple relations between topics like Science Fiction, Utopia/Dystopia, Games, Cyborgs and their various digital and material confluences. Since 2012 she is working as artistic-academic staff in the field of Experimental Informatics at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. karinlingnau.com; Weinspach.org

Ioana Macrea-Toma is a researcher at Blinken Open Society Archives (at Central European University) in Budapest. She teaches classes related to historiography, history of the Cold War, intellectual history. She is currently writing a book about Cold War informational circuits and truth regimes based on Radio Free Europe collections at OSA. http://www.osaarchivum.org/about/staff-list/Ioana-Macrea-Toma

super:serios = games + design + urban interactions ~» superserios.ro «~

Maria Mandea is artist and arts-based researcher. She is working on her PhD at the National University of Arts in Bucharest. Her work focuses on playable media and participatory practices. She is a essential part of super:serios. mariamandea.art

Teodora Ungureanu is an architect and urbanist researcher. She currently studies urban regulations in Romanian mass-neighbourhoods at The Doctoral Programme in Urbanism of `Ion Mincu` University of Architecture and Urbanism, in Bucharest. She is a essential part of super:serios.

Sophia Nan Wu completed her bachelor design study at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver, Canada with a major in visual communication design. She mostly worked on commercial projects in the form of graphic design, website design, UI/UX, branding design etc. Now she is pursuing her Master Degree in Integrated Design at KISD, Koeln International School of Design in Germany.

She believes as a designer, delivering visualizing appealing design is not enough, the design is a tool to solve problems and help make sense of the world. Therefore she shifted her focus to more research-driven and social-related design projects. Her current research area is urban sociology, with a focus on social relations in the local community. Email: sophia_wu0803@hotmail.com

Ilinca Păun - Constantinescu (Bucharest, 1982) she earned her PhD degree in architecture in 2013. She currently practices architecture at Ideogram Studio, teaches theory of architecture at “Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism Bucharest, and leads cultural projects within the IDEILAGRAM Association. Together with her team from IDEILAGRAM, she lead researches and exhibitions such as: “Shrinking Cities in Romania” (MNAC Bucharest, 2016), “On Housing” (Timco Halls Timişoara, 2018), and edited “Shrinking Cities in Romania. Oraşe româneşti în declin” (DOM publishers & MNAC Press 2019).

Kevin Paterka, Lars Köppl and Konstantin Hehl are interdisciplinary design students at KISD, Köln International School of Design. As a team their work expresses itself in a variety of ways: film productions, event design, print design and urban design. As individuals, they are each influenced by different subcultures, contributing to a unique mixture. Their current scientific interest focuses on urban phenomena at the interface between spatial sociology and architectural theory. Email: dreisinnn@gmail.com (or paterka@kisd.de, l.koeppl@kisd.de, kjh@kisd.de).

Audrey Pety is a MA students at KISD Cologne (Germany).

Eduardo Pirrodi is a multidisciplinary designer focusing on services, sound and music installations. With a background in theatre and scriptwriting, he has been lately exploring the world of film-making and documentary. His education includes a BDes at Glasgow School of Art, Köln International School of Design and Aalto University.

Stefan Rusu (born 1964 in Kâietu, Moldova) is a visual artist, curator, editor, and filmmaker, currently based in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. His artistic/curatorial agenda is geared towards the processes of transformation and changes in post-socialist societies after 1989. In 2005-2006 he attended the Curatorial Training Program at De Appel art center from Amsterdam where he co-curated Mercury in Retrograde. https://stefanrusu.net

RYBN.org is an extra-disciplinary artistic research platform, created in 1999 and based in Paris. rybn.org

Lasse Scherffig is an artist, designer and researcher. He is a professor of Interaction Design at Köln International School of Design (KISD) and previously served as the chair of the Art and Technology department at San Francisco Art Institute. After studying cognitive science and digital media, he received a doctorate degree from KHM, Academy of Media Arts Cologne with a thesis on cybernetics and interaction. His work has been exhibited and published internationally. https://lassescherffig.de

Somayyeh Shahhoseiny From October 2017 she is a Ph.D. student at KHM. Her work is supervised by Prof. Georg Troggemann and is focused on human- space relationship. Coming from a design background, her keen interest is to utilize different approaches seeking for new design solutions to enhance the quality of everyday life.

Petr Šourek is a linguist, new media and performance artist, working in different European cities. He is a founder of corruptor travel agency which was recently included in 99 artistic strategies in real politics in the publication Truth is concrete published by Sternberg Press. He is author of many socio/political reportages for European medias. www.corrupttour.com/

Georg Trogemann born in Bamberg (Bavaria), since 1994 Professor for Experimental Informatics at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne. He studied computer science and mathematics at the University of Erlangen, doctorate 1990. In 1997-1999 and 2004-2006 he was the Academy’s Vice-Rector of Research and Infrastructure. His main research interests are Experimental Algorithms, Philosophy of Technology and Theory of Poiesis. www.georgtrogemann.de

Irina Tulbure Architect, Assistant Professor at the Department of History & Theory of Architecture and Heritage Conservation, UAUIM (“Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism). Alumna New Europe College. Master Studies in Conservation of Historical Monuments. Author of Arhitectură şi urbanism în România anilor 1944-1960: Constrângere şi experiment (Architecture and Urbanism in Romania, 1944-1960. Constraint and experiment) Simetria Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016.

Pauline Vierne is a nomadic textile artist exploring alternative lifestyles in remote areas. While her hand-driven practical approach is informed by crafts techniques, her critical thinking is fed by multidisciplinary collaborations. https://pauline-vierne.squarespace.com

Leoni Voegelin has studied Art History and History in Basel, Switzerland. After some projects in the field of video art she began with the Master program “Spiel && Objekt” at the HfS Ernst Busch in Berlin. In her artistic research she questions the nature of human society, the influence of the Anthropocene on nature and the generation of Hybrids and Cyborgs that where raised out of our intertwined living on this planet.

Ioana Vreme Moser is a transmedia narrator and sound artist engaged with research activities, electronic poetics, and ludic notations. She develops her practice around the inconspicuous gestures of everyday existence, altering and transforming mundane objects that she finds in her intimate environments in an attempt to explore the links with their collected memories. She places electronic components and control voltages in different situations of interaction with organic materials, lost and found items and environmental stimuli. Her works are dominated by sardonic narrations, bits and pieces of garbage, anachronous circuitry and low-tech technologies that resound in diagrams, sound-sculptures, hand-made instruments or sound-performance setups. She has been closely engaged with the Electroacoustic Music Studio Krakow, Kinema Ikon experimental group and Simultan, Media Art Association, Timisoara. Currently, she is based in the T10 artist collective, Berlin. https://ioanavrememoser.com

PROJECT COORDINATORS: Dana Diminescu, Tincuta Heinzel
LAYOUT: Maria Mandea, Teodora Ungureanu
Publisher: Loughborough University (© The Author(s)). The authors of this paper acknowledge the right of Loughboroug University to publish “Utopian Cities, Programmed Societies” files under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) licence.

DOI: 10.17028/rd.lboro.9981485

Project cofinanced by the Administration of National Cultural Fund , Romania

PARTNERS:
Institut Polytechnique de Paris (France)
KIDS - Köln International School of Design, Cologne (Germany)
KHM - Academy of Media Arts, Cologne (Germany)
UAUIM - ”Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest (Romania)
Loughborough University (UK)
RYBN.org, Paris (France)
The Paintbrush Factory, Cluj (Romania)
tranzit.ro/Bucuresti (Romania)
City of Victoria (Romania)
S.C. Viromet S.A. (Romania)