

ONCE UPON A FUTURE

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arc en rêve centre d'architecture bordeaux



BORDEAUX
EVENTO 2011

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THE URBAN AND ARTISTIC RENDEZVOUS

FREE FROM 6 TO 16 OCTOBER

EVENTO BORDEAUX 2011
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FROM 6 TO 16 OCTOBER

From October 6th to October 16th 2011, the second edition of EVENTO offered carte blanche to Michelangelo Pistoletto and his foundation Cittadellarte, to initiate an original, surprising and festive contemporary creation event, bringing together many local and international artists.

Original works, dance, performances, concerts, installations, exhibitions, urban games, sharing of savoir-faire and experience, co-construction of civic projects... will take over public spaces and institutions during events encouraging us to reinvent the city and our way of living together.

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bordeaux euratlantique **Tollens Materis Peintures**

EDITO**FRANCINE FORT***arc en rêve centre d'architecture*

'Once Upon a Future' is a narrative focusing on urban utopias taking root and developing in Bordeaux in 2030 – when the city will have reached the magic figure of one million inhabitants. This fictional narrative, inspired by STEALTH.unlimited and written by Bruce Bégout, takes the form of a large mural created by a number of graphic designers and graphic novel artists.

Local residents are the people who best know how to use the city. They deploy forms of collective organization, inventing their city day by day and constructing new forms of solidarity.

STEALTH.unlimited has chosen to place the resident population at the heart of its exploration of utopias, referring to initiatives involving local participants.

The narrative, studded with theoretical references and laced with irony, features a cast of characters from Bordeaux and elsewhere, while the artwork helps to put the various points of view into perspective. Utopia is thus understood in the sense of an alternative vision of how to make cities – along with their inhabitants – and in the sense of thinking about history in motion.

Utopian references, which help us to develop a critical approach to the contemporary city, are interspersed within the story written and shown by the various participants. 15 artists from Bordeaux have offered their interpretation of Bruce Bégout's narrative. Bégout himself interpreted the synopsis written by STEALTH.unlimited, guest curators invited by the artistic director of Evento, Michelangelo Pistoletto. Visitors are invited to come up with their own interpretations.

The exhibition takes place in the Abattoirs, opposite the Halle Debat-Ponsan, a remarkable building from the inter-war period. "We're still

working here”, an installation by Isabelle Kraiser and Marc Pichelin, captures the life of a place which will soon be given a new lease of life as part of the Bordeaux-Euratlantique project.

Arc en rêve invites visitors to extend the exhibition beyond these walls by creating and displaying posters expressing their individual and collective ideas about what Bordeaux might be in 2030.

Francine Fort
General Director
arc en rêve centre d'architecture

INTRODUCTION

STEALTH.unlimited + EMIL JURCAN

Once Upon a Future is a fictional account of a possible utopia for Bordeaux in 2030, inspired by citizen's initiatives.

Why 2030?

2030 is a target year for Bordeaux. Many discussions are currently taking place, on both an institutional and informal level, trying to define what the city will be less than 20 years from now. It may seem that 2030 is far away, but it is actually quite close if we remember that the Berlin Wall was demolished just 22 years ago.

Why utopia?

The notion of utopia has a long history, and it constantly returns to our discourse in specific transitional periods. Today, in the context of a lasting 'financial' crisis that increasingly calls into question many other aspects of our society, it is once again vital to discuss different futures, alternative paths, and solutions. On the other hand, our experience of utopias in the recent past makes us aware of the negative effects that 'imposed' utopias have had on society. They teach us that it is not possible to materialize a utopian society in space first, and then implement new ways of living in it; quite the opposite, in fact. We believe it is possible to imagine a future for our cities based on a different kind of utopia, more pragmatic and less theoretical, more immanent and less transcendent: a hybrid utopia, somewhere between desire and reality.

Why citizen's initiatives?

Different groups and initiatives focusing on how to use urban space emerge from the collective aspirations of citizens. They enable us to imagine a different future based on mutual collaboration and shared experience. Such networks have the potential to produce another form of life in the city,

which is a precondition for another form of urban landscape. Inspired by the communal activities of Bordeaux citizens, we looked at some of the associations currently living and working in the city. Based on their experience, knowledge and imagination, we thought about what Bordeaux might be like in the future.

Why fiction?

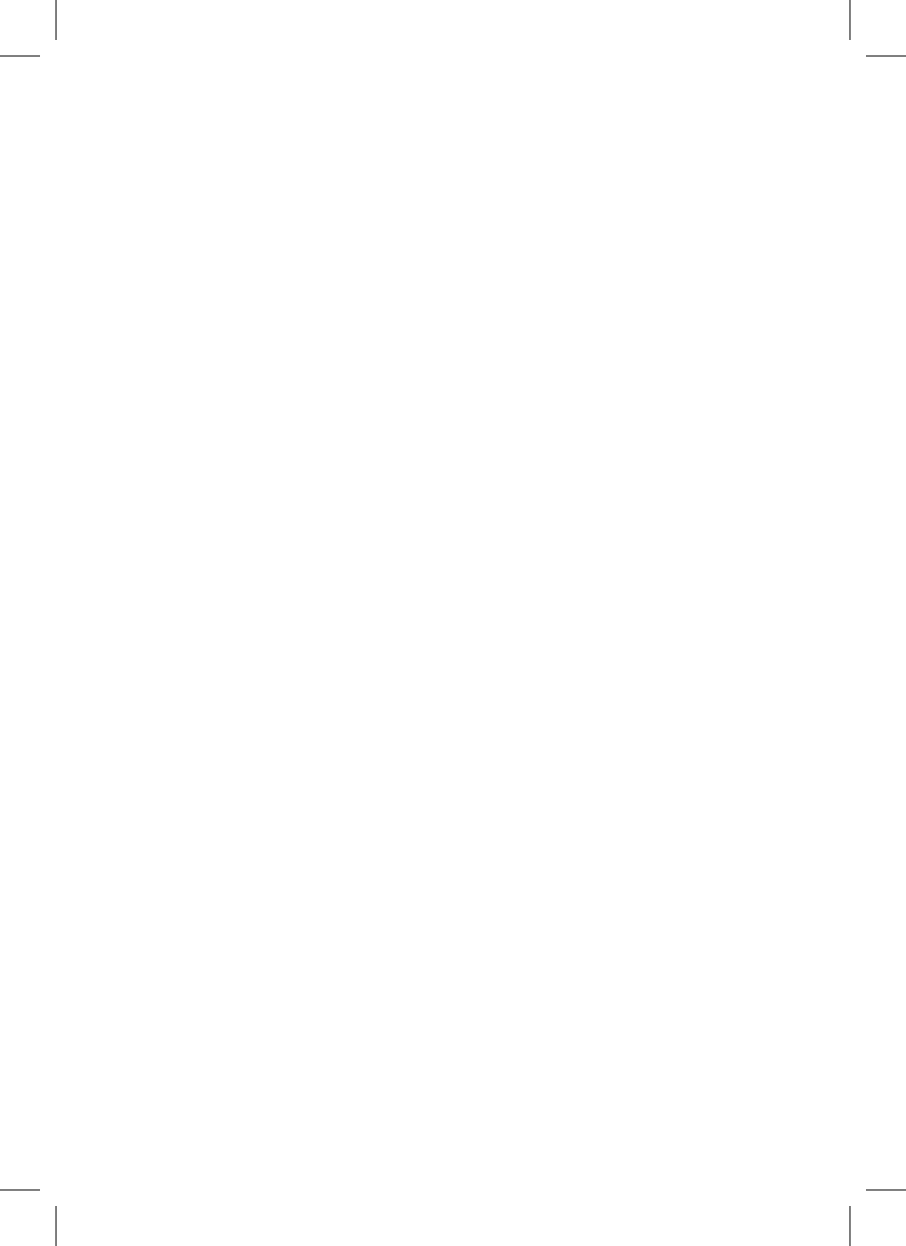
Fiction is a specific form of narrative that deals with events that are not (yet) factual. To express imagination, it is necessary to go beyond current facts once in a while and freely explore the possibilities of our desires, in order to understand clearly what today's limitations are. This helps us to step beyond the rigid framework of the contemporary city and look at its complexities from a distance. It is important to stress that *Once Upon a Future* is not based on individual will, but on the shared aspirations of different groups and individuals who worked together and slowly constructed their thoughts. This makes it 'social fiction'.

Why an exhibition?

This story is the literary (written) part of a larger exhibition, curated with arc en rêve centre d'architecture, where the future of Bordeaux is presented in a series of illustrations made by a dozen graphic artists. Using narrative and the comic genre, we want to express social, economic, philosophical, political and urbanistic thoughts outside of their usual discourse, thus making them less specialized and more accessible. In this sense we also express our belief that the artists, architects, philosophers and writers taking part are not distant from the society in which they live but are an integral part of it. They have all taken part in making "art for an urban re-evolution", as the theme of EVENTO 2011 suggests.

Ana Džokić and Marc Neelen (STEALTH.unlimited)
Emil Jurcan
co-curators *Once Upon a Future*

ONCE UPON A FUTURE
BRUCE BÉGOUT



PROLOGUE
ARE WE A FLOATING UTOPIA?

On 7 February 2030, the shadow of an unprecedented financial crisis – much more serious than those that occurred in 2008, 2014 and 2021 –, looms over the civilized world. Banks, insurance companies, financial organizations, then entire states have gone bankrupt, leaving the civilized world reeling, like Greece and Portugal a few decades ago. There is insufficient liquidity, civil servants are no longer being paid, and thousands of companies have gone to the wall. There is widespread panic among populations facing the consequences of global bankruptcy. Within a few weeks, entire countries have descended into mayhem: there have been general strikes, riots, and challenges to political and social systems. In the space of three months, the already substantial number of unemployed in Europe has shot up by ten million. Extraordinary meetings between world leaders, drastic measures, and recovery plans have all been to no avail. This time the crisis seems deep-seated, long lasting, and irreversible. Could this spell the end of capitalism? In the most fragile states, authoritarian policies have been implemented, sparking fears of a return to the Fascism that existed a century ago. Fear and anxiety has taken hold everywhere.

Iceland, among others, has suffered terribly. Total bankruptcy has shaken the country to its foundations. It is no longer able to pay its public servants or to carry out its traditional administrative functions. Banks, themselves unable to honour their payments, can no longer offer credits. The entire economic and social system has been laid waste: schools, hospitals, and police stations. Retirement pensions and unemployment benefits are no longer being paid. Private companies have shut down one by one, and supplies from outside the country can no longer be brought in. To compound the social tragedy, the natural world has also vented its fury. Two of the country's largest volcanoes have erupted, spewing lava and smoke for days on end. Ash suspended in the air has blocked out the sun and plunged the country into constant darkness. The ash has not only created a nationwide blackout, it has also polluted the atmosphere, harming plants, animals, and natural food sources. Milk, meat and cereals have become inedible. The cash-poor nation cannot afford to import staple foods for its starving population, and a terrible, cruel famine has swept the land. This combination of financial and natural factors has forced the vast majority of Icelanders to leave the country. Some boats have been requisitioned, others illegally seized. A tentative and embryonic form of international aid has emerged to assist the doubly traumatized country, but the global crisis is so serious that people have neither the time nor the resources to show much generosity. By 21 August, almost the entire population has left the island. Rumour has it that only Björk has stayed, singing songs as she wanders through the abandoned towns and across the ash-covered moors.

10,234 people find refuge on *THE WORLD*, one of the largest and most beautiful cruise ships ever built, which has been visiting Iceland. When the crew see the despair and misery of the people who have left everything behind on what has become an almost deserted island, a land almost entirely covered in ash and fire, they decide to do everything they can to help. In actual fact, they have no choice. People organize their lives on board, and a form of emergency solidarity replaces mass tourism. The ship heads for the United States, a traditional haven for immigrants and the landless poor. But they have not taken the worsening crisis into account. *THE WORLD* arrives in New York Harbour on 18 September 2030. A strange welcome committee awaits them: navy frigates, warships, and helicopters. Drones fly over the ship and film the disappointment and anger of the passengers, betrayed by the indifference of the Americans. Grievances, threats, and hostile messages are exchanged. The United States, citing strict and drastic new immigration laws, flatly refuses to allow the asylum-seeking Icelanders to land. Threatening armed intervention, they order the ship to leave; the US government only consents to supply fuel and food. The liner sails to Europe, but meets with the same refusal everywhere it goes. Despite growing health and social problems on board, countries remain inflexible: the crisis makes it impossible for them to let in new immigrants. Local populations see this unwanted immigration as a source of unfair competition, unacceptable in a period of crisis when jobs are becoming harder and harder to find. For three months, *THE WORLD* drifts in international waters and sails from port to port. It is not the only one: dozens of other ships have been similarly forced to wander the seas. They have become floating refugee camps, lost from sight in

the middle of the ocean. Civilized life has become so disorganized that few people are aware of what is happening; people concentrate on their own survival, and the ship full of Icelandic exiles drifts aimlessly, all but abandoned to its fate.

The end of the year 2030 is approaching, and the Bordeaux City Council is in turmoil. The reason for this is not only the crisis and its consequences, but also a promise that was made in early 2010 that the city's population would reach one million within twenty years. Time is running out, the final countdown has begun, but Bordeaux has not reached its target. Despite the city's dynamism, it still needs about 10,000 people to reach the round figure of a million. It might seem surprising that this trivial subject could cause so much concern during a crisis, but the credibility of the Council is at stake. Perhaps honouring this promise is a way of forgetting the world's chaos? Such symbols relieve tension and act as reassuring reference points: the prospect of a city with a million inhabitants is seen as a sign of good health in a pessimistic global context. And that's when a councillor at a council meeting, who has heard about the ill-fated ship from a journalist friend, half-jokingly suggests the crazy idea of taking in the Icelanders to make up the magic million at the eleventh hour. Oddly enough, the proposal meets with general approval, not to say enthusiasm. Not only will the symbolic figure be reached, but the city, at a time of global distress and selfishness, will also display its sense of hospitality. It will send a strong message to other world cities that, even in a crisis, immigration is not a risk but an opportunity, and that the urban utopia continually nourishes itself with

things and people from abroad, with exchange and with imports. A decision is quickly made, and they contact the ship.

On board *THE WORLD*, the news is welcomed with a degree of scepticism. So many disappointments and disillusion have befallen the passengers over the previous months that they are suspicious of such promises. There is a general atmosphere of defiance. But little by little, because the Bordeaux proposal is evidently a serious one, their doubts fade and hope is rekindled. The ship sets sail for the Gironde. People try to find out about their host city, consulting websites and dredging their own memories. They try to learn more about its location, its history, and its present situation. The ship's gangways, decks and lounges buzz with the news: everyone has something to say about it. During the long months on board, far from anywhere, in the middle of the ocean, the refugees have had time to think about their new life. Their own social tragedy has forced them to be harshly critical of the economic system that caused it. They aspire to a new life, and to true social and political change. They no longer really believe in the model that has made them into pariahs. Meetings on the ship allow people to express not only their anger and frustration but also what they aspire to, and to imagine alternative solutions for their future lives. Workshops on ecology, education, and self-sufficiency are set up. The endless hours spent at sea are an opportunity for everyone to think carefully about their vision for the future and the type of society they want to build. In no time at all, the luxurious cruise ship, originally designed for globalized entertainment and mass consumerism, is transformed into a utopian laboratory. Its isolation from the rest of the world fosters complete freedom of speech. *THE WORLD* becomes

a kind of ultimate Ark for social and political imagination. Groups form, eager to think about the future. Notice boards covered in all kinds of messages replace the glitzy show posters. The casino is converted into a people's university where teachers, engineers and other highly qualified people are able to share their knowledge. The huge 6,000-seat theatre becomes a public agora where people can air their grievances. The word "Utopia" is uttered and talked about on many occasions.

When the Bordeaux proposal is confirmed, the ship becomes a hive of frantic activity. On the deck, under the lemon-yellow sun of the Bay of Biscay, a hundred refugees engage in an animated discussion.

Jonah: For some time now, everyone has been talking on this “utopian” ship. I’m not sure I understand what the word means. For me, utopian means unrealistic, divorced from reality, which means it’s harmful. I have no energy to waste on utopia; I want tangible, feasible solutions.

Ezechiella: I agree, we don’t need utopias, wild ramblings and imaginary cities; we need concrete proposals that we can implement. What we need is a bit of pragmatism to get us out of this mess.

Daniel: I don’t agree. We also need the dynamic thrust that comes from imagination and desire. This isn’t about designing a utopia in the traditional sense - rationally organized and totally coherent - it’s about freeing the utopian aspirations that will enable us to push back the limits of what’s possible and to show that something else can be done. I think it’s impossible to do without imaginary constructions. They are useful because they guide us and light the way. Besides, isn’t that what we’ve been doing for several months on this ship? Aren’t we a floating utopia?

Isaiah: It depends what you call utopia. I still have problems with that word, but that’s not what’s really important. It’s obvious that we are the bearers of new proposals for life that we have put together during our exile at sea. But will the people of Bordeaux listen to us and carry out our pro-

posals? After all, what do we really know about the city and its inhabitants? According to the information we have obtained, their hospitality is linked to a planning project for a city of a million inhabitants. Will we be able to make ourselves heard in this context?

Ezechiella: It's true that all we have to offer is our past experience. We've lost everything: our houses, our heritage, our jobs, and our confidence. We only have our memories, and a few shreds of dignity.

Isaiah: That's not true. What we need to bring to the table is our *future* experience. We should give them the gift of our will to change things and to ensure we don't relive the collapse of a system that cast us adrift like plague victims. I'm hopeful that in this new Iceland we'll find willing people like us who want to invent new ways of living.

This is how they discuss how to imagine their future, their vision of a new society, and the role of "utopia" in social and political thinking. Some shy away from the word, arguing that the neo-liberal society that dragged them into chaos itself sees itself as a utopia of free enterprise, of self-regulating markets, and of the end of history. It goes without saying that, in the past, utopia has often been rejected because of its excesses: it is seen as too closed, too idealistic, too remote. Where is Utopia? U-topia: a non-place; a place neither here nor there, with no precise coordinates; a nowhere. Isn't it a way of escaping reality? A way of denying the world? Some people, however, refuse to abandon the word and the idea. They say we need utopias, not as rational and systematic constructions where each aspect and detail

of life is organized and leaves no room for improvisation, but as ways of escaping from a lacklustre reality that might be improved on. It's not about letting our imagination run wild and dreaming up weird places and societies; it's about inventing new forms of life, new spaces, new cities, ways of doing and seeing things that broaden the scope not only of what is possible but also of reality. The people on the ship spend hours discussing their ideals and projects, and everyone has new ideas to share. A former banker wants to create an alternative system for credit; an advertising executive suggests developing an "economy of meaning"; an architect who has lost everything wants to start from scratch.

1. **A METROPOLITAN EDEN**

On 12 December 2030, *THE WORLD* enters the Gironde estuary. It glides slowly, almost majestically up the river. On either side are villages with tiled roofs and vineyards stretching as far as the eye can see. The passengers are impatient to land, to discover their destination after their long months spent adrift. Some are afraid of being disappointed, others make no secret of their enthusiasm: at last they can walk on terra firma and begin a new life. Most of all, the children are more excited than usual and chatter excitedly in the aisles. Something in the air promises a beautiful, delicious, surprising day that will leave long-lasting, unique memories. Sometimes, before we even experience an event, we know that it will remain forever engraved on our souls, and we feverishly await the confirmation of our expectations.

Scene 1

Bordeaux is buzzing with expectation. The riverside quays have been fitted out to provide a mooring for the huge ship. A reception committee has prepared a welcome ceremony. Thousands of people throng behind the metal gates, chattering excitedly. But City Hall has decided not to move the migrants in immediately. They are to remain living on

the ship for a time, while individual solutions are found for each of them. No refugee camp has been set up: the mayor of Bordeaux said she found the idea offensive.

At 3.36 pm, *THE WORLD* sails past the four pillars of the Bacalan-Bastide Bridge. Thousands of spectators waved Icelandic and European flags. As if watching a slow travelling shot in a movie, the passengers on the decks discover the city, the long eighteenth century façades of pale stone, the vast, flat, white suburbs, and the green hillsides on the right bank. A strangely classical setting for the city of the future! The immigrants were not expecting such a majestic scene. Dozens of sailing boats and motor launches accompany the ship, forming a celebratory cortège. The crisis has sharpened people's sensibilities and expectations: they wave, whistle, and cheer as the ship comes to rest at last, opposite the Place des Quinconces. It sounds its foghorn three times to mark the joyful event. The long journey of the recession refugees is at last drawing to a close. But only for them, for thousands of others, mainly in Northern Europe, are still wandering across land and sea in search of a safe haven. The white gangways are lowered, and the first immigrants disembark to meet the council and representatives of local associations. An orchestra of electric guitars, conducted by a local celebrity, plays *Stairway to Heaven*. "Madam Mayor, I presume?"

During the ceremony at the foot of the Monument des Girondins on the Place des Quinconces (where hundreds of little blonde girls stand motionless around the vast buffet, neither dancing, nor singing, nor making speeches), the Mayor, after the traditional welcome speech where she goes over the different events that led to this extraordinary event and

talks about plans for the future, hands all the immigrants a bilingual brochure on Bordeaux in 2030, its role as a European metropolis, its ambitions and its assets. The historical city has 270,000 inhabitants; counting the suburbs, where 33 administrative districts make up Greater Bordeaux Council (CUB), the total comes to almost a million. It boasts eight bridges, an international airport, a TGV station, a new business district, several eco-sustainable districts, and so on. During the ceremony, the Icelanders cast a cursory glance at the bilingual brochure. Among other things, they read the following:

“Bordeaux is now one hour from Toulouse, two hours from Paris, and three hours from Madrid. It has built new bridges, a new ring road, and new intercity motorways. All these factors have allowed Bordeaux to become a key European city, and to attract new markets and new inhabitants. The city is anchored in tradition but open to the world, as symbolized by its river, the Garonne, which provides a gateway to the ocean and the other continents”. (p. 2)

“The city’s population rose steadily from 2010 onwards, with 3,000 new residents moving to Bordeaux every year. It now has 270,000 inhabitants, with 15,000 at La Bastide, 10,000 in the Saint-Jean district, and 10,000 to the north near the wet dock and the lakeside”. (p. 3)

“Our city has made a great leap forward in economic, social and cultural terms, and this has irrevocably changed its appearance. All the demographic, economic and property development indicators relating to built and on-going projects prove beyond doubt that the conurbation has turned

into a kind of metropolitan Eden. Since the economic boom that led to durable job creation, we have decided to concentrate on reinforcing this economic strategy in the long term". (p. 12)

"The Aquitaine region has several production clusters. Its success is rooted in the fact that business and research centres and leaders in particular fields of expertise go hand in hand. The city's human scale encourages a spirit of on-going collaboration and synergy. Everyone, whatever their level of responsibility, is involved in collaborative projects that require a high degree of creativity and cutting-edge techno-scientific skills, targeting highly competitive markets with strong development potential. These innovative business sectors have provided a new basis for the local economy". (p. 17)

The brochure also talks about quality of life, cultural events, social and economic networks, academic development, employment pools, creative economics, business incubators, and so on. The crisis suddenly seems remote and almost unreal. The Mayor and her team mingle with the immigrants, talks to them in English, has her photo taken, says a few words in Icelandic ("*velkomnir vinir mínir*", "*bú munt vera hamingjusamur hér*"), and talks about her plans, her hopes, and the way things are going to be organized. From that day on, a municipal team will be in charge of the immigrants' welfare, helping them get to know to city, introducing them to people who might help them find a job and a place to live, providing them with legal aid, and signing them up for French classes. The municipal New Residents Bureau is no stranger to this kind of work, 250,000 people having moved to Greater Bordeaux over the last two decades. A

welter of large-scale projects have made it possible for these new inhabitants to settle in quickly: new districts have been built, and densification has meant that it has been possible to avoid urban extension which, in terms of both cost and ecological impact, is no longer a viable development model.

The Mayor symbolically hands the “key to the city” to the immigrants: a USB key containing all the important information they need to help them settle in. She also gives each of them an audio-guide linked to invisible terminals installed around the city to make it easier to interact with the city and its inhabitants. Bordeaux residents and Icelanders mingle, ask each other questions, and exchange phone numbers. It is a time of mutual discovery, surprise and curiosity. What a strange ceremony! Forced but legal immigration has given rise to a public gala. Other groups of immigrants, more numerous and less eagerly expected, have been greeted rather less warmly.

Scene 2

At the end of the day of celebration, the immigrants go back to *THE WORLD*. They have the overwhelming impression that the city is strangely sheltered from the crisis that has brought the world to its knees. The brochure they see as the key to their future makes no mention of the serious problems faced by the world economy and the social upheavals that are afoot. Is it an illusion? What is this “Metropolitan Eden” all about? Where have they ended up? A certain anxiety tempers their joy at having found a safe haven where they can start afresh. That evening, they hear on the radio that, after weeks of bloody struggle, the alter-

globalist rebellion has overthrown the government in the United Kingdom. A new regime of councils has been set up. The monarchy has been abolished, and all the banks in the City have been nationalized. The country has been renamed Oceania.

Oceania is a name for a country used by George Orwell in his dystopian novel "1984" published in 1949 as the writer's response to Stalin's totalitarian regime in the USSR.

2.

WE DON'T WANT TO BE HELPED OR CARED FOR

The day after their arrival, the immigrants begin planning their future. Eager to get to know their new home, they divide into small groups and, in the company of an urban immigration officer, they walk the length and breadth of their host city. One group takes a bus chartered by the council to the neighbourhood by the lake, which has been developed extensively over the past twenty years. They stop at the shopping centre, where two years ago the IKEA store, after a long strike and sit-in by staff, has been transformed into IDEA, a free public forum devoted to alternative forms of development, citizens' initiatives, and non-profit organizations in the fields of housing, organic foods, education, and self-sufficiency. Its meetings are held in the building formerly occupied by the Swedish store. The Icelanders get off the bus in the huge shopping centre car park and are surprised to see foreign car number plates everywhere: Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Bulgaria. They are also surprised by the place itself: on a vast grey concrete esplanade, a traditional shopping centre rubs shoulders with IDEA, whose principles run counter to mass consumerism. In the car park, homeless people wander between the cars, begging for money, calling out to customers, and joking with each other. Some sit under the IDEA sign in leather armchairs, watching the spec-

tacle of mass consumerism unfold around them. Is this a sign that the promised Eldorado is not what they imagined it to be? After all, why would the recession the recession have miraculously spared this city?

Scene 1

They all file into the building. The children's play area has been transformed into a self-managed crèche, where kids play and draw pictures under the watchful eye of their nannies. They go up the stairs with their guide and walk around, following a linear path similar to the signposted corridors of the subway and looking at the booths run by associations providing information and assistance to interested visitors. The commercial atmosphere of the display area has changed completely. It now looks more like a squat dotted with easily identifiable booths. Nothing looks official; it is all very relaxed, bohemian and ramshackle, like some alternative village *fête*. They go over to a brightly coloured booth in the former mattress aisle, where new forms of citizenship are being presented. A woman of indeterminate age who has heard their story welcomes them, explaining that the purpose of the association is to draft an urban citizens' charter in collaboration with local residents. She speaks mechanically, as if reciting a lesson learnt the previous day whose meaning she is unsure of, talking about the role of what she calls "the City in the fullest sense", the City as a setting for political life, a place where human beings show themselves to be exactly who they are and decide to strive together towards what they consider to be the common good. She gives the visitors a brochure containing information about this new vision of active, creative citizenship, which sees

laws as the temporary expressions of citizens' desires and needs rather than immutable divinities or commandments set in stone forever. She lists the key principles that characterize this new form of citizenship:

- A City that aims to bring people together without denying their identities or their differences.
- Citizens exercising continuous and real control over the actions of elected officials and political leaders via right of referral on decisions made at local authority level.
- A system of rotating responsibilities and random ballots ("just like the 'allotment' system in ancient Athens", she says).
- Every effort is made to foster do-it-yourself approaches and self-management, with citizens taking control of their own lives and destinies.
- Restoration and extension of forms of economic participation in terms of sharing basic goods in a spirit of respect for privacy and individual identity.
- Respect for the natural and human environment.

The Icelanders continue their visit. In the former kitchen sales area, they are curious to find out more about a large booth with a sign saying *Castors* (Beavers). A young man comes up to them and strikes up a conversation. With great enthusiasm, as if talking about his own first-hand experience, he tells them the story of the *Castors*. In Pessac in 1948, when there was a serious shortage of decent housing following the war, a group of shipyard labourers decided to build 150 houses applying principles of mutual help and self-sufficiency. They could not borrow money from the banks, so they designed their own funding system: they persuaded

the State to give them a loan based on their collective commitment to self-building and management of assets. Others took up the idea, and the project spread beyond Bordeaux. A law was passed to provide a framework for this highly original builders' cooperative; it was repealed in 1977, only to be adopted again in 2015. This gave a new lease of life to the cooperative, which, since then, has developed several districts in greater Bordeaux and now forms a national non-profit-making construction agency.

Scene 2

Several visitors are attracted by a booth in the former restaurant called *NoUrbanism*. They are intrigued by its slogan: "For the promotion of empty gaps". An elderly man who looks like an overqualified laboratory technician tells them what the aims of the association are: promoting empty spaces, vacant lots, waste ground and ruins, striving for the conservation of wild, unused, deserted and abandoned places at the heart of the city; refusing densification and the total occupation of urban land. He says it is important to preserve vacant lots where it is possible to dream, to be bored, to hang around, to wander, and that we should stop filling everything in and building willy-nilly. Having nothing to do can be a positive opportunity, a way of accepting the world without wanting to transform it and make it into one's own image and likeness. He gives the Icelanders a detailed map of local "white zones" (areas on maps that are undetermined and have neither use nor reference) and suggests that they might visit them when the zones have been installed.

They continue their visit in a building that looks more like a bazaar piled high with ideas and projects than an urban utopia. A young boy with tousled hair and a possessed look gently pokes fun at the people running the booths. He has a strange facial tic: a kind of involuntary twitch in his right cheek. He warns them about vain imagination, reminding them of the difference between dreams and reality. He seems familiar with the various initiatives on display, and the people looking after the booths also seem to know him. He calls out to the Icelanders:

“What we need is not radical thinking but the means to carry out our own ideas. Once we have the means, this will lead to imagination, but a project without resources is a just a beautiful but sterile dream”.

“A new life is possible, but hope and dreams are not enough, we have to create the concrete practical conditions for people to take control of their lives, without outside assistance. We don’t want to be helped or cared for, we want to start building the right conditions for our lives today”.

The Icelanders are surprised by the young man’s serious, mature tone, in marked contrast with his scruffy appearance. They want to know more and ask him who he is. “Who I am is not important, I am a shadow among shadows, a nobody in the nameless crowd”. The young man (who is barely 18 years old) invites them to leave this “showroom of the ideal” and follow him through the city. He wants to show them that initiatives also flourish far from their institutional sources and official showcases. Some agree to follow him. Outside, about a hundred people with banners and rattles

are vehemently protesting in front of the building; they want IKEA to reopen. They shout at the people coming out, calling them terrorists and utopianists. The homeless people watch them with wry smiles, mocking them in turn and walking among them begging for coins. The young man who spoke like a prophet of concreteness piles his little group of followers into a van and drives off in the direction of *Bobevita 2.0* (LDT).

Scene 3

Bobevita 2.0 is a self-help retirement home founded at the beginning of the century. Its residents decided to Live and Die Together (LDT) and came up with a highly original organization far from the traditional image of gloomy hospices where people go to die. The Icelanders soon understand that the young man is the grandson of one of the residents, an 85-year-old woman. She explains how the place works over a glass of wine. From the outside, nothing distinguishes the home from a traditional retirement home, but it has a unique set of rules and regulations. At *Bobevita 2.0* communal activities are carried out in a spirit of solidarity, and residents are involved in all aspects of daily life, helping people to move around, administering medical care, and looking after safety and maintenance. The residents manage the place themselves and have drawn up a shared project development plan. All decisions are made collectively; everyone plays an active role instead of just being dependent. The twilight years are hard to bear and often involve a form of isolation that only accentuates the pain of growing old and losing one's independence. *Bobevita 2.0* aims to combat this solitude and the feeling of isolation it creates by promoting

the idea of active participation and mutual help among the elderly. Residents do not only look after themselves, they also take part in the life of the local area by helping families (babysitting, helping kids with their homework, etc.). The oldest Icelanders – many of whom have lost their pensions as a result of the recession – are very interested in this organization and ask the young man's grandmother some questions. "The hardest thing", she says, "is to decide almost as soon as you retire to live together in this way for the rest of your life. It's a real commitment, like a marriage contract".

The young man adds that the aim of the association is to encourage more people to adopt this system of retirement and create 10 new Bobevitas each year. Increased life expectancy means new economic responses and approaches are needed. He says we must fight against inertia and inward-lookingness and encourage social and generational diversity.

Scene 4

The day is drawing to a close; the young man offers to take the visitors back to their ship. In the van, they talk about what they've seen and look out of the window at the low-rise suburban buildings, the neat little houses, and the renovated shops. In the city centre, they pass the *Grand Hôtel de Bordeaux* on the Place de la Comédie, now occupied by the Rom community. Under the benevolent gaze of the local council, the square has been transformed into a living museum of gypsy culture, with exhibitions, concerts, restaurants, and so on. In the courtyard, scruffy children are playing football in front of tourists admiring the columns of the Grand Théâtre.

Allotment was one of two distinguishing features of Athens direct democracy, besides the assembly of all citizens. Allotment was a way of appointing ordinary citizens to government offices and courts by lottery as a random sample from a larger pool of candidates.

3.

WHEN BORDEAUX REACHES 1,000,000 INHABITANTS

The ship has now been at its moorings for ten days. It has become not only a tourist attraction, but also a source of tension. Behind the gates on the quayside, some demonstrators are protesting against the arrival of the new immigrants, while others express their support. Every day, an inquisitive, excited and fascinated crowd mills around the ship that towers over the nearby buildings. The huge white form, with its six decks and pristine funnels, contrasts sharply with the classical design of the city's façades. On board, the time for discovery is over. People have started to get their bearings; some eagerly await offers of housing from the council, while others do not want to remain inactive and suggest projects of their own to the settlement officers.

Scene 1

Some immigrants leave the ship and walk down the gangway. They are greeted by demonstrators protesting against their presence. Their banners bear slogans, some hostile to urban growth, others claiming that immigration increases unemployment. It seems that the enthusiasm of the Council is not shared by the entire population. The immigrants talk to one of the demonstrators, who refuses to admit that his

protest is related to any form of xenophobia. He doesn't blame the immigrants personally and knows the painful history of their exile, but he is critical of the council's policy, which raises the all too familiar spectre of uncontrolled urban growth. He wants to ask the city's leaders about a possible population freeze: why constantly seek to increase the population? Isn't this endless growth the root cause of the problem? Doesn't population growth have a negative impact on the environment and employment? There are eight billion inhabitants on the planet, set to rise to ten billion within twenty years. Where will it stop? Our planet is finite, and this gigantic population puts it under too much ecological pressure; this in turn puts everyone's survival at risk. We must, as soon as possible, begin a radical population control process, reducing the number of people on earth to ensure that those who remain live better and longer. Someone in the crowd mentions terraforming, but the first speaker sneered at this utopian dream of the human colonization of distant planets.

It should be said that, when the decision was made to give the Icelanders a home, the Bordeaux City Council set up a giant electronic population counter in front of City Hall. It is stuck at 989,475: six huge black-on-white figures as tall as doors. As soon as the Icelandic immigrants are included, it will jump to a million and the city's sirens will ring out as a sign of victory, to mark the crucial event. It is said that the local paper *Le Sud-Ouest* has received anonymous threats about the number. The person who sent the messages by post said he would do everything in his power to stop the population going beyond one million, threatening somewhat worryingly that he would take *all necessary steps*

to ensure the figure either remained constant or fell. In plain language, this means that the million-and-first inhabitant will be killed. City Hall does not take these threats seriously, but a Malthusian mentality is gaining ground.

Scene 2

Some immigrants, seeking an alternative model for society that will avoid repeating the mistakes and tragedies of neo-liberalism, attend the inauguration of the last phase of the Euratlantique project in Floirac. This project, which since 2016 has seen the redevelopment of the district around the railway station, now extends to the opposite bank of the Garonne where it takes on a different appearance, less focused on housing, work and consumption. Crossing the new Jean-Jacques Bosc bridge, guests and locals walk in compact groups along the *Avenue de la Décroissance* ("Degrowth Avenue") towards the new esplanade dedicated to alternative forms of urban and civic development. Here lies a new district designed to be a laboratory open to projects invented by the citizens themselves. Where the Arena events venue (which was never built due to insufficient private investment) would have been is a new zone whose development principles are the exact opposite – with the free space left open to non-commercial initiatives. This district is arranged around a square named after Serge Latouche, one of the fathers of the concept of "degrowth". The man himself is here for the inauguration of the square and the new district around it. Over the past five years, local people have democratically designed the district along with urban designers and architects, expressing their wishes in terms of urban facilities, density, layout, transport, etc.

Nothing has been done without their consent. The overall idea has been to apply general principles of “degrowth” to urban life: controlling energy resources, reducing ecological footprints, sharing collective goods, rejecting the dogma of economic growth, drastically changing ways of living, and returning to ideals of local interaction and solidarity. The most surprising thing is the presence of so much empty space; the inhabitants have decided to leave whole areas untouched in order to disconnect their initiative from the idea of land use and property. Were they influenced by *NoUrbanism*? Whether they were or not, they have opted for small-scale mobile structures that can adapt to the instability of their changing needs. They helped the urban designers come up with the minimal infrastructures necessary for living in a neighbourhood. Why put up buildings which in ten years might no longer fit their needs? Buildings that will be hard to modify or demolish? Above all, they have focused on energy and food self-sufficiency and basic utilities (water, power, mains drainage, transport). Great care has been taken to set up collective allotments and solar energy parks. The idea has been to reduce the effect of human intervention on the land to a minimum: a kind of nomadism, but urban and long-term. Every year, a festival modelled on *Burning Man* in Nevada commemorates the original idea of this unique neighbourhood, which has made it possible for unplanned, short-lived events to take place.

Serge Latouche meets the locals and thanks them for the tribute being paid to his work. He is an old man who walks with a stick and smiles politely, seeming almost embarrassed by the honours being heaped upon him. Suddenly the crowd that has gathered for the inauguration becomes agitated

and interrupts the good-natured festivities. To their stupefaction, they have discovered posters hostile to the idea of degrowth plastered on the white walls of the bandstand in the middle of the square. "Together Against Collectivism", says one. "Give us back our factories, our supermarkets, our SUVs", says another. A red poster demands new exit ramps on the outer ring road (which has very few of them) in order to allow the city to expand into the surrounding countryside. "Wealth is the way forward!" says another poster. They all bear the enigmatic signature of the SPENCER GROUP. One of the Icelandic immigrants has seen that name before. He remembers that one of the people demonstrating in front of the ship that very morning had been wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with it. He had also been wearing dark glasses and a baseball cap, and had been trying not to burst out laughing. Meanwhile, a young woman tries to tear down the posters that are spoiling the ceremony. She hears someone behind her say: "this is just an avatar of global decadence". She reflects that she is unsure of the meaning of the word "avatar", but dares not turn round to ask.

Scene 3

In the bandstand, a group of sociology students talks to Latouche about the principles of his theory of degrowth and the likelihood it might be taken up worldwide given that two thirds of the world's population are still living under the poverty line and have never even experienced growth. Some of the students are in favour of degrowth, but challenge its general relevance, given that most people on earth have no access to the minimum services required for a decent standard of living. Latouche explains that the

idea is not to abandon all forms of production: after all, Man is a *homo faber*, and producing, manufacturing and creating are part of his natural and historic condition. Instead the idea is to shift production away from productivism, to invent new forms of activity that cost society and the land nothing. This naturally requires a paradigm shift that goes far beyond a simple modification of the economy. One student challenges the possibility for such a paradigm shift, which he says can only occur during grave environmental or social crises, such as natural disasters or devastating world wars. He says that the development of science, technology, and the arts reflects a notion of progress and perfectibility that is a determining feature of modernity and which no one fundamentally wishes to challenge or abandon. Sometimes, he says, partisans of degrowth seem to behave as if this quest for a better life, seen as a historic leap forward for humanity, might one day cease, as if people might suddenly be satisfied with things the way they are: a kind of paralysis of our rational desire for improvement. Latouche replies that the idea is not to abandon material and scientific progress, but to ensure that it does not go hand in hand with a productivist economy that only sees progress through the prism of consumerism and via the production of ever more numerous products and merchandise, most of which rapidly become obsolete and have to be continually replaced with new ones. We should aspire to greater restraint in terms of energy consumption and production, and strive to develop what was called *otium* in the ancient world: in other words, leisure activities. In any case, degrowth will happen one day, and the idea is to anticipate this and organize ourselves so that we are not caught unaware; we should prepare for the end of unlimited energy resources, the end of waste and

ecological irresponsibility. "Finiteness is catching up with us", says Latouche. "We live in a finite human world, and we have to learn how to manage that finiteness. We must give up the idea of there being no limit to what we can wish for. To achieve this, we are going to repopulate the countryside, redevelop local production, and give up energy-guzzling industrial agriculture in favour of farming by people for people, living in human-scale towns with planted walls".

Scene 4

Night has fallen, and most of the inhabitants are asleep. A few night owls are out on a bar crawl, hoping they can drown their sorrows in alcohol. An Icelander leaning on a bar talks to a young illegal immigrant who is amazed at how easy it has been for the Icelandic immigrants to be accepted. He sees it as a form of injustice. Each year, he says, thousands of refugees from Africa and Asia are turned back at the frontiers of Europe, and nobody seems to care. He doesn't understand why Bordeaux has welcomed the Icelanders and ignored the others. Is it because they are white, educated, and Christian? They were victims of a tragedy, but aren't all refugees in exactly the same situation? He is neither jealous nor angry, just disappointed. Perhaps if he'd arrived on a cruise liner, he says, things would have been different.

Thomas Robert Malthus (1766 – 1834) published his “Essay on the Principle of Population as it Affects the Future Improvement of Society” in 1798. He stated that the dangers of population growth would prevent endless progress towards a utopian society.

Serge Latouche (1940) is an economist. He is a famous proponent of de-growth, a term that advocates the downscaling of production and consumption, as overconsumption lies at the root of long term environmental issues and social inequalities.

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) developed an all-embracing conception of evolution as the progressive development of the physical world, biological organisms, the human mind, and human culture and societies. Spencer is best known for coining the concept “survival of the fittest”.

4.

New means of production

Scene 1

A bored-looking young Icelandic girl leans on the white rail of deck number 5. Her friends have gone for a walk. She gazes absently at the city, as if through a pane of glass. Suddenly something catches her eye; through the trees on the right bank she can make out a building that seems to be in ruins, with a sort of huge ramp that might be a good spot for some skateboarding. She has already seen the riverside skate park, but she found it a bit too crowded and naff. She wants something a bit wilder, less official. She decides to go and take a look. She takes the tram (line A), walks along the right bank and arrives in front of the Niel barracks, a huge building that is less derelict than it seemed from the ship. Much of it seems to have been renovated. She goes through a large iron gate and walks towards the central avenue with faux ruins and vacant lots sprayed with tags and graffiti on either side. She sees that the skateboard ramp is, in fact, no accident: a group of people are working on it, enlarging it and raising it to a phenomenal, gravity-defying height. She spontaneously goes over to join them. She introduces herself and quickly tells them her story. Above all, she is curious to know more about this place that seems to com-

bine office space with leisure activities. The people she talks to, of various ages, explain what the place is all about, and describe the project – called *Lamarck* – being undertaken there. It involves a group of different activities and companies focusing on the post-industrial economy, urban services, street art, and new means of communication. They call themselves *neo-Darwinists*, not to be confused with the creationists who think that you just have to inject money into the art world to automatically make a profit. They are developing a foundation to promote local projects, and trying to integrate their activities into an approach based on responsibility towards others and the natural environment. They reject the idea of the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest, preferring instead the idea of evolution based on mutual help and synergy. They believe that it is not only competition that produces the necessary conditions for scientific, technical and artistic innovation, but also collaboration. Nina, the young Icelander, tells them she has taken part in discussions like this on the ship, where they have talked about new modes of development, creating independent zones where people can produce their own goods and share their experiences. Her father is a banker who lost everything in the Icelandic recession and who is trying to think about his profession in a new way and to invent new approaches to credit and aid for development. The others invite her to come back to the barracks with her father and other immigrants. They say they can help the Icelanders put together their own projects and share their experiences. Nina is surprised to see that the ground floor of each building is open and empty: only the upper floors are fitted out. A young red-headed boy explains that this is intentional, and that it symbolizes the “missing component”

that is a feature of all projects. "We want to develop the idea that empty space is fundamental to all economic and artistic activity."

Scene 2

For some time, terrorist activities carried out by Spencer groups have been hitting the headlines: damage to alternative spaces, bomb threats, and so on. The presence of *THE WORLD* seems to have pushed the tensions one notch further. Bordeaux experienced similar unrest when the wet dock district was renovated in 2022. The protests, and sometimes uncontrollable violence, were then caused by an opposition between supporters of collective urbanism and design, ego-fundamentalists, who wanted to transform the area into an urban marina with a residential area and recreation facilities. Only the *Garage Postmoderne* resisted, but it is now totally hemmed in by chic residential buildings, like a smudge of engine oil on a white tuxedo. Gentrification, which usually spells the disappearance of social diversity and an increasingly inward-looking, socially uniform population, has all but prevailed in what used to be one of the most staunchly working-class areas of Bordeaux. The tensions have never really disappeared. While the ship is becoming a local landmark, as the Kawamata Bridge used to be, the *Garage Postmoderne* once again falls victim to criminal damage: a fire in its kitchens. A large part of the building is severely damaged. This is the last straw: the people that run the *Garage* decide to move out. They inform their 5,000 members of their decision by e-mail; they have understood that, working alone, they will never be strong enough to resist the well-organized urban forces and their fierce and highly effective lobbying.

They contact the factory *BOLA* and other associations with which they have already discussed the idea of coming together in a single, larger and more visible location, generating strength in numbers and pooling their expertise. They set out to find a place big enough to house a new platform for artists and community groups. They want to find a place where they can for example set up a furniture workshop in conjunction with private individuals, making skills and tools available (for repairs, decoration, etc.) and helping people make the goods they need themselves, rethinking material production in relation to artistic creativity. It will be a kind of collaborative New Bauhaus where production, art and participation will be closely linked: a haven for neo-democratic design. Members of the associations who planned to join the project visit several vacant spaces in and around Bordeaux that might provide a home for this huge eco-artistic initiative. They look at Warehouse 14 on the riverside (which would keep the project located in the city centre), one of the abandoned towers in the Grand Parc, the former Mérignac Soleil hypermarket (a vast monument to consumerism that could be repurposed into a unique space for art and participative projects), and an area of the university campus where an organic wine cooperative is already operating. They ultimately settle on one of the Mériadeck towers and paint it red, the colour of blood, life, and rebellion. Mériadeck, the futuristic utopia of the 1970s, is thus redeveloped according to new principles of intelligent cities, eco-compatible development, and collaborative urban design.

Scene 3

The first meeting on the great project is held in the square in front of the deep red building that serves as its headquarters. Over 5,000 people come, standing in groups behind the colourful banners of the associations they belong to. Passers-by stop and look at the crowd with a mixture of curiosity and indifference. Some stand on Mériadeck's suspended terraces. When everyone is settled and ready to listen, a presenter takes the floor and lists the guiding principles shared by all the associations present:

- Pooling skills and resources within a democratic and collegiate framework;
- Making available the associations' technical, administrative and accountancy resources;
- Making the art and production centre open to its urban environment and fostering interaction with the city;
- Incubating emerging projects.

The presenter explains that the idea is to combine efforts within a structure that is both large and flexible, thus fostering not only synergy but also differentiation, and to share essential resources and rethink production methods as a group, while giving each association total freedom to pursue its own creative work. He details the terms of their charter:

"With this major project we are giving a new thrust to the creative economy, following initiatives that took place at the turn of the century. On this special and unique occasion, we are turning towards the future on solid foundations. It

is vital to remember that we are, in a sense, being watched and judged as pioneers and that as such we have a certain responsibility. Others will take up our initiative, improving on it as they go. We are the living advocates of our principles. Above, to get to the point, we have all decided to share our tangible and intangible resources within a production and decision-making structure based on collective agreement and democratic governance, but which also leaves people free rein to undertake personal projects. This enables us to reduce overheads by pooling resources, for example technical infrastructure and admin. It allows us to support emerging programmes and non-competitive start-ups... "

Suddenly, an explosion brings the meeting to an abrupt halt. The blast flings the people in the front rows to the ground. Some people scream and run, others lie on the floor, terror-stricken. Panic spreads across the esplanade like wildfire. A bomb has just gone off in the crowd. Only one person is seriously injured, and is rushed to hospital. People are shocked and angry.

Scene 4

In a café on Place Nansouty, a youth reads a book while drinking a cup of coffee. It is a book by Conrad (*The Secret Agent?*) He seems totally engrossed in his reading and pays no attention to the people around him or the cars outside belching their daily quota of carbon dioxide into the air. He closes his book, leaves two euro coins on the Formica table and stands up. As he leaves, a slip of paper he has been using as a bookmark falls onto the floor without his noticing. It is a flyer bearing the words: *Down with the welfare state, up with competition!*

Jean-Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, Chevalier de la Marck (1744 - 1829), or Lamarck, is the proponent of the first truly cohesive theory of evolution. Lamarckism is based on the idea that an organism can transfer the characteristics acquired during its lifetime to its offspring.

Neo-Darwinism is the modern version of Darwinian evolutionary theory which holds that the processes responsible for small-scale micro-evolutionary changes can be extrapolated indefinitely to produce macro-evolutionary transformations.

Creationism is the belief that humanity, life, the earth, and the universe are the result of a supernatural act of well-planned design. In 2010, around 40% of people in the US believed in a strict interpretation of creationism.

Joseph Conrad (1857–1924) was a novelist. He wrote stories and novels, predominantly about anti-heroic characters in extreme situations. His book "The Secret Agent" published in 1907 deals broadly with the notions of anarchism, espionage, and terrorism.

5. ***WHERE WILL WE LIVE?***

It is dusk, a time when a change of mood occurs in all humans, be it positive or negative, euphoric or melancholic. The sky is tinged with purple, reminding the immigrants of the play of light of the aurora borealis or a painting by El Greco. Some of them sip wine in one of the ship's lounges. They talk about this and that, and the conversation slowly and naturally shifts to the acts of terrorism that have recently troubled the legendary calm of the city. One of the immigrants, Joshua, wonders if they have made the right choice. Perhaps it has all been a pipe dream? After all, is the utopian dream not destined to remain an inaccessible ideal? "We have found a convenient outlet for our imaginative temperament", he said. The real world still has problems that prevent the total fulfilment of wishes. Have they not been naïve to believe that the city can, more than any other, provide a new starting point and serve as a laboratory for a new way of life? The others listen in silence with pursed lips, but evidently do not share his doubts. The negative attitude of the people on the quayside and the Spencer groups is, as one of them says, apparently expressing the general opinion of the group, limited to a tiny minority clinging to an obsolete development model. "Their fear makes them hang on to an idealized past they want to miraculously preserve from the

risks of the new". Until now, the welcome and settlement support they have received can hardly be faulted. Indeed, the following day, representatives of several companies and associations are due to visit the ship to present their settlement proposals. "Let's wait to hear what they say", he says, "then we'll make up our minds".

Scene 1

It is 9 a.m., and most of the immigrants have been busy preparing for the meeting. It will be held in the giant 6,000-seat auditorium, which can hold almost all the adult members of the Icelandic diaspora. The first representatives of the housing development companies arrive at 10. Hands are shaken, polite greetings exchanged. The meeting begins at 11. The Greater Bordeaux urban development officer begins by making a speech that is, like the man himself, short, dry, and nervous. He recalled the major projects that have been carried out over the past twenty years, in particular the 50,000 collective housing units built over that short time. He also outlines the urban planning strategy of the Greater Bordeaux Council: the development of individual housing alone is no longer viable economically or ecologically. The idea, he says in a rather scholarly tone, has been to densify the city, but on a human scale. The huge low-rise housing blocks have not been systematically demolished to make way for the new developments (modular buildings each containing 10 to 15 units, forming urban hamlets with small gardens and a communal square). Where possible, the old residential blocks have been converted. The general idea has been to offer a range of varied solutions, with tower blocks, low-rise residential buildings, and houses standing side by

side, because different people have different aspirations in terms of housing. Moreover, the attraction of private home ownership has diminished somewhat, so that many companies are offering a system of very long-term leases. The people in the audience begin to shuffle their feet; they are impatient to hear what the urban developers have to say.

Scene 2

Near the ship, young girls on roller-skates wearing sexy orange uniforms hand out leaflets to passers-by, their faces paralysed into stereotyped smiles, hoping to attract the curiosity of the immigrants. In the leaflets is an advertisement for a 12 square metre apartment in the old city centre: *all mod cons, reasonable price*. The slumlords have changed their tactics. The age of shameful discretion is over; they now sell slums like other consumer goods. They speak of *basic comfort* at rock-bottom prices, hiding the disgraceful lack of facilities in the seedy flats they offer for rent. Urban densification has led to the fragmentation of the housing pool and an increase in dubious offers like these. A thriving sub-market of broom cupboards and shoeboxes has developed in broad daylight.

Scene 3

Back in the giant auditorium. In the audience, a mother who has come with her two daughters, 8 and 5 years old, looks on with interest. The first property development representative takes the floor.

a) He is a young man, full of life and enthusiasm, wearing a navy blue suit. Only his pierced right nostril clashes with the image of a clean-shaven young executive, the embodiment of immaculate salesmanship. He seems not to be intimidated by the crowd. He presents an original model for participative self-building called *ACP*, run by a non-profit-making organization funded by the CUB and the Bordeaux City Council. He outlines the general principles of this kind of development. The organization provides future residents with empty, flexible, often elementary structures, called "skeletons", then helps them to fit them out or even alter them. Sometimes what is provided is just a space with basic utilities (water, power, mains sewage). In all cases, 50% of the space the resident purchases is "green" (flower or vegetable gardens, balconies, etc.). The young man says he is going to present some examples, and the audience expects an advertisement to appear on the giant screen behind him. Instead, the young man removes his jacket and carefully lays it over the back of a chair, unbuttons his shirt and takes it off. As he does this, the audience becomes more and more agitated. The elder sister asks her mother what is happening, but she can find neither an explanation nor a lie to satisfy her daughter's curiosity. The young man is now standing bare-chested on the stage. His body is covered in tattoos. He takes a pen and brings it closer to his chest. It turns out to be a tiny video camera. An image appears on the giant screen: the tattoos covering his body depict urban development projects, on which he gives a running commentary. He moves from picture to picture: floor plans, drawings of empty flats with huge picture windows and balconies overlooking the city. "You see", he says, "you can do anything you want, anything imaginable. Your future home is like a blank page.

We give you the pens so you can fill in the frame of your own life". He then zooms in on the tattoo located next to his right nipple: a project developed in Bègles around the year 2010. The different stages of the project can be clearly seen: the construction of the building; the first families moving in and making changes with the help of designers who give them all the technical assistance they need; and the final result, with the family sitting in a simply furnished flat: an idyllic picture of domestic bliss. It's as if the idea is to portray urban happiness for the benefit of a young couple of aliens trying to understand, in a few simple lessons, the deep-seated motivations of the human race at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The girls' mother talks aloud about the kind of life they might have in such a place. "Maybe", she said to the people sitting next to her, whom she seems to know and like, "we could set up an Icelandic community there – a new Reykjavik".

b) A representative of the *5-5-5 Programme* now moves to the centre of the stage in her wheelchair. She wants to present the project for a mobile, nomadic habitat that her company has been promoting and developing over the last 6 years. It consists of long-term leases (5 - 20 years) on a range of houses or flats that can be occupied for 5 days, 5 months or 5 years, *as one wishes*. There are 22 sites in the city and its suburbs that can be occupied *ad libitum*, sometimes in surprising locations, such as a former petrol station in Eysines and abandoned barracks at La Bastide. A central computer manages the rotation of residents and informs them of other available sites. At the entrance to each site is an electronic noticeboard, similar to the ones used by municipal car parks and American motels, displaying the number

of free places in the 3 categories of housing and listing the services that are available. The 5-5-5 rep shows the audience an example: a block of buildings in the city centre, behind the Cours Xavier Arnoz. Only the eighteenth century façades have been preserved. Inside is an astonishing array of different spaces: from an empty esplanade for camper vans (complete with basic utilities) to traditional, flexible-use apartments. She also talks about *Babylonia*, a project her company has developed and implemented in the city centre. This involves mobile 25 square metre planted balconies of adjustable height that can be moved up and down the street; they are fixed to a sort of mobile scaffolding (a service team is in charge of moving it). People living on the street can rent a balcony (for a maximum of one week, but several times a year) before passing it on to his or her neighbours. It means everyone can enjoy a green, open space in the centre of the city. Cars and pedestrians can pass freely underneath the structure, and the renters' only obligation is to maintain the balcony and look after the plants. An instruction leaflet is supplied, and a special support team is on hand to provide assistance to users.

c) Now it's the turn of a private developer who is here to sell his project, a gated community dedicated to playing golf and scrabble: *Villas Green Ideal*. He doesn't make a big speech, instead launching straight into a video of one of his communities in Pessac. He talks the audience through a grandiloquent film, complete with Tchaikovsky soundtrack, showing a chic ultra-secure residential estate bristling with CCTV and guard dogs. He vaunts the merits of the project: comfort, peace and quiet, select neighbours, security. Nobody has to wait for a tee; you can even have your own little car to ferry

you to and from the greens. The course itself is superb, easy to get to, and blends in with the environment. A spectator loudly nicknames the speaker *Mr No-No*: no noise, no disturbance, no danger, no pollution, no hidden surprises; laughter ripples through the audience. The screen shows residents in plus-fours holding glasses of wine on a neo-Tuscan patio, talking about their lifestyle and comparing it to Switzerland.

d) Not one, but several people now appear on the stage. They are members of a builders' cooperative called *The Solution*; because, they say, "we are the solution". They introduce themselves; an architect (50 years old, greying temples), a ruddy-cheeked and jovial voluntarily unemployed person, a woman heavy machinery driver, and a single father with his two children. Happily and chaotically, they lay out the principles of their project: long term land lease, joint investment and joint ownership, shared administration, legal and accounting aid, equal weighting of votes for members irrespective of initial investment, flexibility of use and individual choice, etc. They take their inspiration from the *Castors*, offering very low-cost communally managed housing (2,200 € per square metre) and collective ownership of purchased lots and buildings. This system of mutual help allows them to make collective investments that single individuals could never afford, for example building a chlorine- and chemical-free eco-swimming pool. They belong to the national network called Habicoop which tries to facilitate first-time property ownership when property speculation is rife. To avoid speculation, participants agree to resell their share to the cooperative at purchase price plus inflation, which means it is impossible to make any profit. *The Solution* then show short videos showing urban hamlets working on

these principles, charming groups of unpretentious, discreet houses without the Disneyfied appearance of many new builds. The audience asks questions: “what about collective regulations?” “is the system flexible enough to allow everyone to live as they please without coming under pressure from the group?”

“We only share obligations”, says the single father. “Everyone is free to choose whether they take part in communal activities. But some things are compulsory, such as maintenance of facilities and admin work. This actually takes up very little time as we are so well organized: it’s far less time-consuming than the members meetings”. “The benefits are twofold”, explains the voluntarily unemployed. “Our system is less costly, and it fosters social interaction, which eases problems of isolation and individualism. So there are two advantages rolled into one”. The architect now details potential forms of cooperation, talking about what participants in *The Solution* actually share: building management, facilities maintenance (gardens, pool, etc.), mutual help (homework, cultural outings, child-minding services). “It’s a hybrid community that combines collective commitments with individual choice, based on voluntary participation and common agreement and not on majority approval”.

Scene 4

The meeting is over; it has lasted over two hours. Some of the Icelanders chat excitedly with the representatives of the housing companies and ask for more details. They pocket business cards, fill in forms, exchange phone numbers, and make appointments. Others wander around the ship, a little

confused by so many varied and unusual proposals. They feel they need to step back from it all, and to think about it with a clear head. One of the daughters of the slumlord has managed to get on board of *THE WORLD*; on roller-skates she hands out leaflets to the immigrants. Her presence does not go unnoticed. She obviously knew about the meeting, because she makes a forced effort to emphasize the merits of what she has to offer: "You don't have to cooperate, or concern yourself with building your own house, or learn to play golf. We give you everything you need, it requires no effort from you at all".

6.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO HAVE IN COMMON?

22 February 2031. It is now two months since *THE WORLD* glided past the pillars of the Bacalan-Bastide bridge. Some immigrants have settled in the city, while others have chosen to stay on the ship, waiting for a solution that fits their needs and aspirations. A new Icelandic district is being collectively built at La Benaugue, where 800 residents are taking part in a new urban project; they are the first to embark on such an initiative. They are developing a communal vegetable garden and hosting an African NGO (from Mali, to be precise) that is visiting Europe to teach its former colonisers the principles of organic farming adapted to global warming, economical water consumption, and the effects of heat on vegetation and the habitat.

Scene 1

At a public meeting in a municipal hall in La Benaugue, people involved in a residential project inspired by the *Castors* explain the general principles of their organization to the Icelanders. At a buffet in honour of the new arrivals, they present the history of the initiative: they first asked themselves what they want to have in common, what they wanted everyone to share, in the indistinct but vital area between what is

private and what is public. They explored ways of managing their own water and power supply. They set up an energy cooperative that supplies the neighbourhood and makes them virtually self-sufficient. Using a clever system of wells, water collectors, wind turbines, and solar panels, they have built two micro power stations that are enough to supply the needs of 100 families at half the price of standard utilities providers, both private and public. The high initial outlay has been rapidly offset by collective buying and reduced short-term expenditure. Within two years, they even hope to sell surplus power to the city. Although making a profit is not one of the founding principles of the association, it would mean they could invest in further micro power stations. They've even opened a gym with a state-of-the-art system where energy expended by people using the step machines and other sports equipment is transformed into power by highly efficient turbines and fed into the local grid. Nothing is lost, everything is transformed, and no energy is wasted. Everyone pursues his own wishes while participating in the common good, a new vision of Adam Smith's *invisible hand*, though less liberal and driven by the idea of mutual help. But collective action does not stop there: it also includes participation in transport (car pools), help for families (child-minding, homework, group holidays) and food self-sufficiency. Mahmoud, elected leader of the organization for a two-year mandate, says that their aim is not to create "an inward-looking oasis of happiness in an unfair world". They want to export their model, and to do this they are making contact with other residents' collectives in Bordeaux and elsewhere who wish to follow their example. He is happy to be able to exchange views and share experiences with the Icelanders.

They in turn are very interested in the way local residents manage resources and organize collective energy use. Having often talked about this on the ship, they consider self-management to be the most viable form of development in that it combines respect for the rules of democracy with the benefits of participation: a good compromise between individual and collective approaches.

Scene 2

We attend a meeting in a self-managed urban garden (*Eden Eden*), run along similar lines to *Le Jardin de ta Soeur*. The meeting is held in a kind of agora at the bottom of the garden, near the vegetable plots and greenhouses. It looks like a large wooden bowl, with removable steps that are not aligned but staggered at intervals of a few centimetres, and which serve as temporary seating. Once the seats are folded away, the "bowl" regains its smooth, uniform appearance and can be used to collect rainwater. The garden also has Wi-Fi, a recording and mixing studio, and screens that can be used to communicate with other nodes in the city. It is early in the afternoon and the weather is mild for February; there's almost a feeling of spring in the air. Around the agora are cabins containing information for users and visitors about garden regulations, use and resources. The aim is to share expertise, useful tips, and skills, and to rediscover how to use one's hands and head in the spirit of William Morris's *Arts and Crafts* movement. People can learn to plant, grow, and harvest things, and acquire a degree of food self-sufficiency inspired by the locavore movement. A number of collective gardens like this have sprung up over the past fifteen years, combining areas for relaxation, production and action.

Often residents look after an area that has been left vacant and which is often destined to be taken over by a property developer. They clean it up and refurbish it, and get local council permission to manage it legally. Twenty-five years ago, this is how the *Jardin de ta Sœur (None of Your Business Garden)*, a garden created by the *Social Centre Bordeaux North*, was run. The authorities recognized the value of the initiative and gave them permission to use the space. The initiative spawned others. Each time, the authorities are eager to keep these areas public, so that they are not just used by local residents or the people involved in managing them. Partnership agreements are signed, creating a third kind of space, halfway between private and public space, neither individualistic nor State-driven. At *Eden Eden*, the garden has been developed not only horizontally but also vertically, with planted walls on the surrounding buildings and rooftop water collectors. They've also created a large communal vegetable garden where participants come to dig the ground, sow seeds, plant out seedlings, weed the plots, and pick vegetables. Some have even joined a green cooperative that sells surplus fruit and veg locally and uses the profits to invest in new facilities. Today's meeting focuses on preparations for the annual party held on the first day of spring.

Scene 3

THE WORLD is no longer alone. During the night, another giant ship has moored on the quayside in Bordeaux. It is the luxury liner *Circea*. But the aim of its visit is very different and much more ordinary: simply tourism. In Bacalan, next to the Wine Tourism Cultural Centre, a theme park devoted to

wine and winemaking is opening. 2,000 American and Canadian tourists have come for the opening. On the quayside, a group of American tourists meets a few Icelanders who have left their ship to go to the market. The Americans, with that child-like enthusiasm so typical of globalized tourists, want to know if the Icelanders are also there for the inauguration of the *Vinopark*. They apparently know nothing of the Icelanders' story, and have never heard of their fantastic adventure – even though it had taken them to the gateway of the New World. The discussion is fraught with mutual misunderstanding. The Americans can't clearly grasp the aims of the immigrants and the reasons why they want a new life. They, too, have invested in their ship: they own a suite on it, and can sail the world whenever the fancy takes them. They seem to be blissfully unaware of the crisis that has befallen the western world, living on their ship as if it were a floating oasis, cut off from the world and all its cares.

The invisible hand, also known as the “invisible hand of the market”, is a term first coined by economist Adam Smith to describe the self-regulating nature of the marketplace. The term also shows how transcendental, almost mystical, explanations can be found at the roots of economic science.

Eden, Eden, Eden is a book by Pierre Guyotat. The novel (1970) is set in an apocalyptic and polluted Algerian desert during the war with France and was banned for 11 years from being publicized or sold to under-18s.

Circe was, in Greek mythology, believed to be the daughter of Helios, the god of the sun, and Perse, one of the Oceanids. Circe made her star appearance in Homer's *Odyssey*, where she turned the crew of Odysseus' ship into pigs. They remained on the island for one year feasting and drinking wine.

7. ***TOWARDS A POLITICS OF THE MULTITUDE***

Preparations are underway for a political campaign in June 2031. The Mayor of Bordeaux has decided (under pressure from current events? Out of mere opportunism?) to make radical and spectacular changes to the way the municipality was run, proposing a system of participative democracy that will give citizens not only a voice, but real decision-making power. Each district in Bordeaux is to organize constituencies of 5,000 citizens each, from which 200 people's representatives will be randomly selected to sit on the municipal assembly and decide on the city's budget planning for the next 20 years. 200 people for each area of 5,000 inhabitants: a total of 6,600 representatives. This means a complete political overhaul, which goes beyond the framework of representative democracy and traditional parties (which make no secret of their disapproval, accusing the Mayor of bonapartism). The Hauts de Garonne area has already set an example, taking inspiration from the experience of Porto Alegre by giving inhabitants the opportunity to decide how public money is spent on sport, culture and leisure.

In the space of a few days, thousands of posters have appeared on special election noticeboards. They are not from traditional parties, but from groups or individuals presenting

their ideas for this strange election, aware that they have a very slim chance of being elected, since the final selection would be random. One group in particular stands out. It is called SOMETHING IS MISSING. Among its signatories are a handful of Icelanders who are already well integrated into the local community. A passer-by, hands clasped behind his back, reads one of their posters. It demands, for instance, total direct democracy (which it calls "wild democracy") for municipal management, based on random selection of representatives, right of control and veto over representatives by inhabitants, the separation of powers, and prohibition from holding posts concurrently. All day long, the council's information screens show videos of people from around the world talking about economic self-management initiatives in their country, their region, or their village. Places for debate and information exchange have sprung up all over the city. They look like mobile kiosks with computers and screens connected not only to different neighbourhoods but also to other world cities. In each kiosk sits a moderator who gives information to visitors and organizes mini-debates. The moderator is also selected randomly from among the city's inhabitants and is replaced daily, which means that everyone has a chance to familiarize himself with this new type of election. Everyone obtains information about municipal policy and helps others to do the same.

Scene 1

In one of the kiosks, thirty or so locals are watching a live broadcast of the Mayor's speech. The Mayor wants to justify her initiative and explain why she made this choice: "For several years", she says, "citizens have been more and more involved in local politics. Larger and larger doses of participative democracy have been injected into our institutions at all levels of the decision-making chain. We're not talking about abandoning the system of representation, which can be highly effective in countries with large populations faced with complex problems. We're talking about, wherever possible, giving people a degree of sovereignty that prevents them from feeling alienated from their institutions. It seems to me that this is possible in human-scale cities". She now outlines her vision of the city for the next twenty years and talks about major new projects, including a giant cooperative near the lake in the Bordeaux Nord district that should provide food self-sufficiency for a neighbourhood of 25,000 inhabitants, and an almost invisible wind farm on the nearby slopes in partnership with local district councils. She also talks about problems the city will have to face in times of economic and ecological crisis: urban densification, climate change, economic management of energy resources, drastic reduction of the city's carbon footprint, social and financial solidarity, and so on.

Scene 2

Over two-thirds of the Icelanders have now left the ship. The rest are about to follow suit. Few want to stay on boards; still fewer talk of leaving altogether (where could they go?). Their island is still covered in ash and ice. A delegation of immigrants meets with the recently elected municipal assembly to talk about the future of the ship. The 6,600 delegates are assembled on Square Serge Latouche, the concert hall in the Euratlantique district. After two days of discussion, three options emerge (votes will be cast at the next assembly):

- Moving the ship to a new location between Eysines and Blanquefort and converting it into a micro-city of 3,000 inhabitants that would also be used as a municipal culture and leisure complex. The council would manage its facilities, and any crew members who chose to stay on would also take part in managing the ship.
- Selling the ship and investing the money in immigrant settlement programmes.
- Creating a delegation of volunteer pioneers to found a new city in Greenland, a kind of New Bordeaux on arable land that has now thawed out because of global warming.

Scene 3

One of last remaining Icelandic couples who have yet to decide whether to settle on dry land awaits the assembly's decision. The ship seems very empty now. Nothing remains of their adventure: the fears, the joy, and the incredible sense of hope their arrival brought them. The captain notices the couple talking in the bar on Deck 5 and goes over to talk to

them. His words are tinged with sadness: the melancholy mood of departure. Never had he dreamed of taking part in such an adventure or being involved in such historic events. He has heard about the proposal for a delegation of people from Bordeaux to found a settlement in Greenland. He says he finds the idea quite attractive; after all he is a sailor, a man who travels and cannot stay in one place, mobile within mobility. "I don't know if we've found our utopia", he says, "but I do know that looking for it was as good as any adventure. In the end, true utopia lies in our never-fulfilled aspirations".

Participatory budgeting (first fully implemented in Porto Alegre, Brazil, since 1989) is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making in which ordinary people decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget.

Wild democracy. An expression ("démocratie sauvage") coined by Claude Lefort. Its basic premiss is that a democratic regime has no other basis than a perpetual debate about what power is and how it should be exercised. There is not – and there never can be – a legitimate basis for democracy as the 'best' regime, since the only truth of democracy is conflict, discussion, and the perpetual questioning of political criteria.



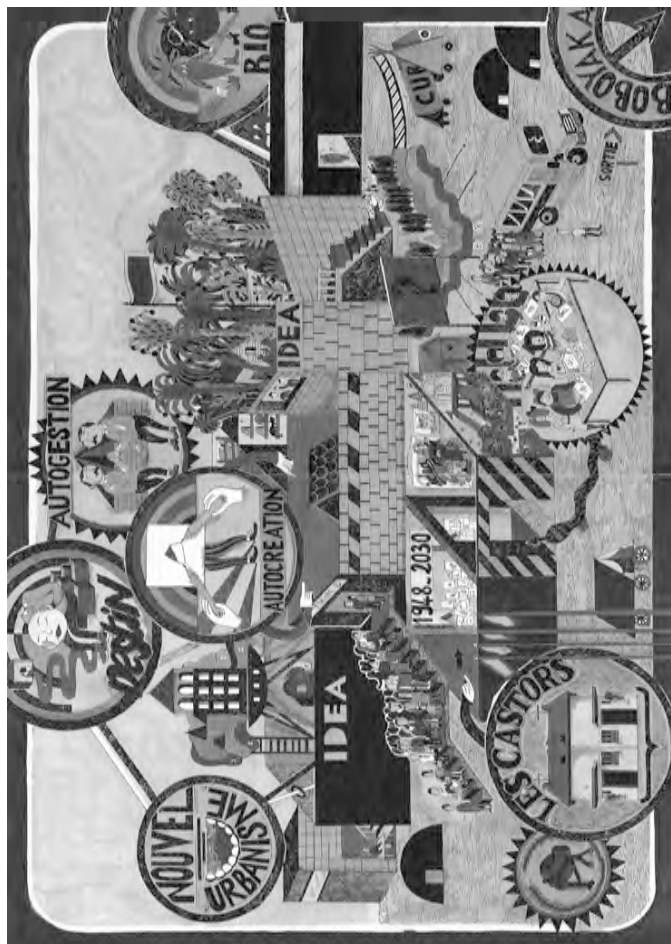
**FRESCO DRAWINGS
& ON-SITE GRAPHIC WORKS
EXTRACTS**



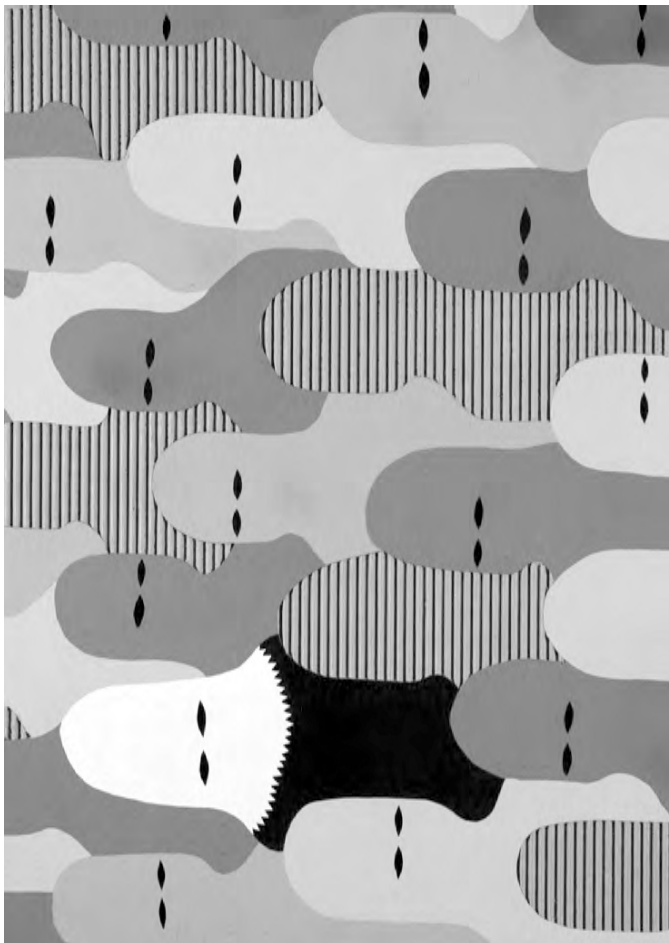
ADRIEN DEMONT



CAMILLE LAVAUD



HAVEC



SANDRINE REVEL



GUILLAUME TROUILLARD

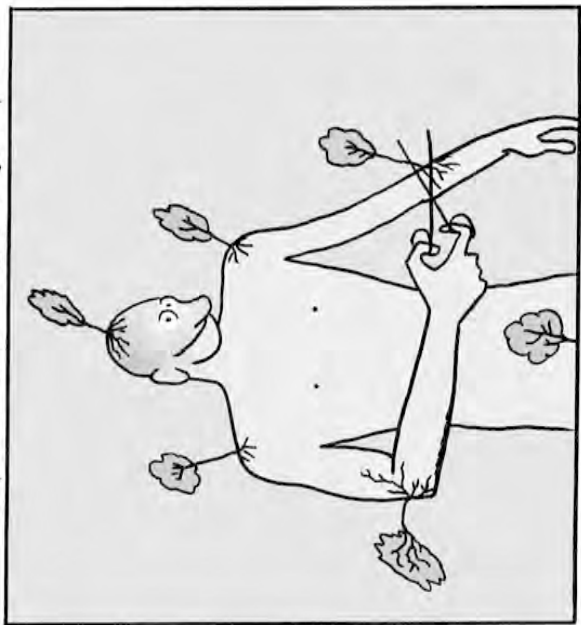


FRANÇOIS AYROLES



DAVID PRUDHOMME

AUTOGESTION



SAINTE-MACHINE



SAINTE-MACHINE



Lorsque Bordeaux

-ATTEINT-

1 000 000 

3

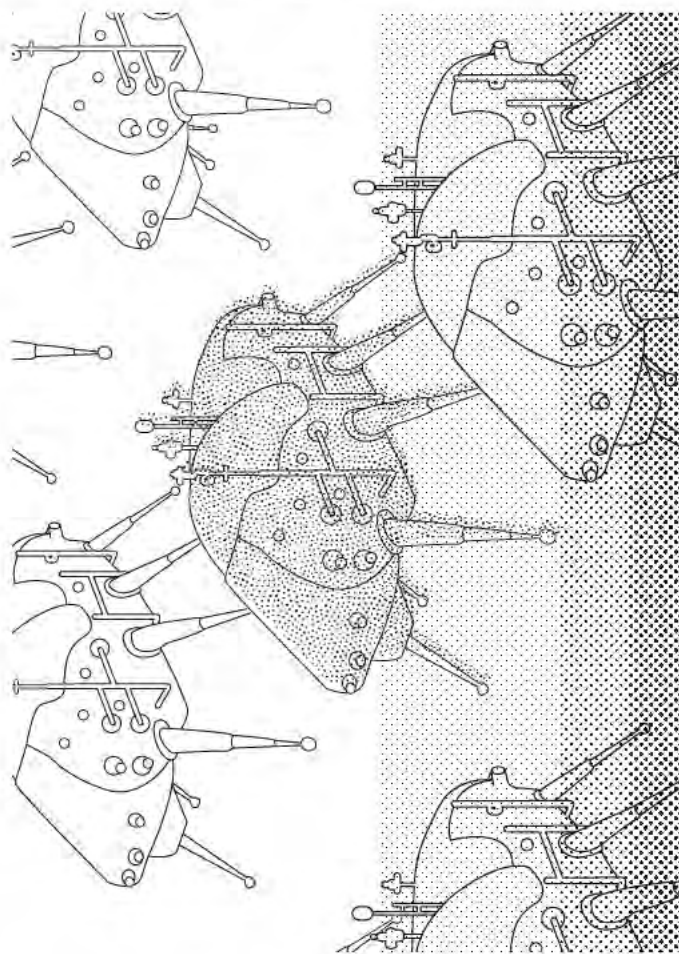
CHAPTER

**When Bordeaux
reaches 1 000 000**

3

CHAPITRE

LOUP NIBOYET



ISABELLE KRAISER & MARC PICHELIN





LOCAL INITIATIVES *met by STEALTH.unlimited*

The **CASTORS** (Beavers) of **Pessac** (1948) is the first in a range of self-constructed cooperative housing neighbourhoods in France, started in 1948 when 150 workers of a shipyard, helped by the factory priest, took the fulfilment of their housing needs into their own hands.

The **SOCIAL CENTRE BORDEAUX NORD** (1963) is a place for initiatives carried by people, and backed by professionals. Much of its capacity comes from the 1970s and a ten-year struggle over housing issues in the (then slum-like) workers neighbourhood. Today, the Centre actively redefines its role within the everlasting change of the neighbourhood.

www.csbn.org

The **GARAGE MODERNE** (2000), in a warehouse of the ex-industrial neighbourhood Bacalan, is a non-profit co-operative workshop with 3000 members, aimed at providing D-I-Y or assisted car repairs, bicycle maintenance services and facilities for occasional artistic events.

www.legaragemoderne.org

The **Fabrique POLA** (2000), initiated by artists and associations of Bordeaux with a common desire to share skills, means of production and communication tools, strives for solidarity for the cultural sector. Since 2009 POLA is precariously located in the Bacalan area.

www.pola.fr

Le **JARDIN DE TA SŒUR** (Non of Your Business Garden) is a community garden on a reclaimed wasteland in Bordeaux Nord. In 2003 Social Centre Bordeaux Nord and collective Bruit du Frigo initiated here a temporary garden with the inhabitants. Nowadays, the garden is permanent and mutually maintained by citizens and the municipality.

www.jardindetasoeur.org

The housing co-operative **H'NORD** (2006) is a diverse group of people aiming to develop 40 dwellings based on principles of environmental awareness, mutualisation and collective ownership – a model that defies market speculation mechanisms and can be built at approximately half of the market price.

hnord.org

The **BOBOYAKA** (2007) is a lively group of people close to retirement. They seek a collective housing solution in which they can live together on their own terms in solidarity – until the very end – while still actively contributing their knowledge and skills to society.

Project DARWIN (2008), at the former Niel barracks in Bordeaux, is set up as a eco-system to create a smaller-scale, creative and forward thinking economy with a minimal environmental footprint in which designers, artists and businesses will collaborate.

www.projetdarwin.eu

SELECTED URBAN & ARCHITECTURAL REFERENCES

BORDEAUX... UN JOUR !

Cyprien Alfred-Duprat,
architect, Bordeaux, 1876-1933

A determinedly modern, outstandingly creative architect, Cyprien Alfred-Duprat expressed his genius in a visionary book: "Bordeaux un jour !" (Bordeaux One Day!) prefaced by Camille Jullian in 1929. This utopian architect had anticipated the existence of Greater Bordeaux and the million-strong metropolis of the future.

CLUSTER CITY, 1952

Peter & Alison Smithson,
architects

The Smithsons believed that "roads are also places": the city is above all a network whose watchwords are mobility, density and connectivity.

NEW BABYLON, 1959-1974

Constant Nieuwenhuys, artist

"Life is an endless journey through a world that changes so fast that it always appears to be different": New Babylon is a human-scale, creative city, profoundly influenced by the passage of time and the migrations and encounters experienced by its inhabitants.

FUN PALACE, 1961-1964

Cedric Price, architect

Influenced by Buckminster Fuller's work, Cedric Price designed a number of projects reflecting his interest in structural experiments that are both daring and minimalist.

WALKING CITY, 1964**Ron Herron**, Archigram, architects

Walking City explores the concept of indeterminate geographical context, open to perpetual change. Here, the city is seen as a single building-cum-vehicle.

NO-STOP-CITY, 1969**Andrea Branzi**, Archizoom, architects

Designed in the context of radical Italian architecture, then centred in Florence, this project uses caustic humour to challenge the ability of large modern cities to play a meaningful role in land use and planning.

SUPERSURFACE, 1970**Superstudio**, architects

Founded in Florence in 1966, Superstudio set up experiments based chiefly on a system of meshes and grids that are immutable in all but scale and meaning.

LA MÉMÉ, Louvain-la-Neuve,

Belgium, 1975

Lucien Kroll, architect

"What is the way out? Only polished, obstinate subversion, without asperities, undeviating and unavoidable..." (Lucien Kroll, *Manifesto for the G8 meeting*, 2 March 2001).

GREEN MACHINE, 1977-1980**Glen Howard Small**, architect

The 'biomorphic biosphere' Small began working on in 1965 here finds its fullest expression: he believed that Nature was the ultimate stage of technology, and saw the city of the future as a gigantic ecosystem which, as it grew, would embrace entire cities.

QUATERNARY SECTOR, 1978**Yona Friedman**, architect

The 'quaternary sector' is a concept designed to spotlight the activities of a part of the population that is referred to as 'inactive' but whose role is nevertheless essential to the country's economy.

HIGHRISE OF HOMES, 1981**James Wines and SITE**, architects, unbuilt project

James Wines trained as a sculptor before turning to architecture in the 1960s. A theorist fascinated by the Italian Trecento, his ambition was to meld built objects and public spaces with their context, and he rejected standardized production in favour of participative architecture, closer to Man and Nature and more able to communicate its own values.

BLACK ROCK CITY, Nevada
Desert, USA, 1990
Burning Man Festival

Black Rock City is a temporary city built and then dismantled without trace. While it stands, for one week each year, it is the most populous 'city' in Nevada.

URBAN FARMING, 1990,
Detroit, USA
Urban farming

Since the early 1990s, Detroit has been going through a second economic revolution: this time a green one. More and more urban farms are springing up in the very centre of the city, run by associations set up by local residents eager to find new ways of meeting their own needs.

SARGFABRIK, Vienna, Austria,
1996
BKK-2 Architektur ZT GmbH,
architects

BKK-2 (*Baukunst Kollektiv*: the 'art of building' collective), was set up in Vienna in the 1980s by Johny Winter and Franz Sumnitsch. Following on from Viennese experiments in collective living and housing (such as those carried out in the early twentieth century by Otto Neurath, which Adolf Loos became involved in), BKK-2 attempted to forge closer links between users and institutions by encouraging participative approaches.

DERBORENCE ISLAND,
parc Henri-Matisse, Lille, 1997
Gilles Clément, gardener
and landscape designer

At the centre of the city park laid out in 1995 opposite the Lille-Europe high speed train station, on a moulded concrete base 7 metres tall, is a natural space 3,500 square metres in area, inaccessible to the public. What is the meaning of this "purloined forest" which, like Edgar Allen Poe's *Purloined Letter*, is visible to all, yet hidden from view?

SUPERSHED,

Newbern, Alabama, USA, 1997
Rural Studio, architects,
 Auburn University

Rural Studio has come up with innovative projects bringing together local residents and students seeking alternative responses to social housing issues.

SITUATION ROOM, 2007

Hackitectura, architects

For this group of multidisciplinary activists based in Seville, an architectural design is not merely a built object, it is a complex machine. It is a physical space, a social network, and a place of convergence for many different technologies – a three-headed sphere.

JUNKSPACE, 2001

Rem Koolhaas, architect

For Rem Koolhaas, “one of the qualities of junkspace is to imply that a building might still not be finished. [Which] makes way for an interpretation that runs counter to all traditional readings of architecture”.

SHOPPING, 2001

Rem Koolhaas, architect
 + **Design Harvard School**

Cosumption, however, “is almost lie a kind of ecology. We have to understand [it] as a global system. And we have to admit that we can no more criticize it than we can criticize the oxygen in the air, for we are completely immersed in it”.

56, RUE SAINT-BLAISE, Paris, 2003

AAA, architects

“Le 56” is a communal garden created on the initiative of the Paris City authorities and a self-managed architecture workshop operating in the Saint-Blaise district (20th *arrondissement*). Its aim is to encourage local residents to make the city their own.

PLUS, 2004,

Philippe Druot, Anne Lacaton,
Jean Philippe Vassal, architects

Lacaton/Vassal are outstanding for their highly ethical professional approach, for example the way they reject the diktats that reduce housing to a financial product. This ethical commitment goes hand in hand with a determined quest for economical and generous solutions: how to offer more space, more light and more comfort using a minimum of resources.

ADD ON. 20 HÖHENMETER,

Vienna, Austria, 2005

Peter Fattinger, architect

Under the leadership of Peter Fattinger, students are asked to reconsider academic concepts and look for alternative ways of designing and building temporary and permanent structures.

NDSM Wharf, Amsterdam,

Netherlands, 2010

The NDSM Wharf is a unique space dedicated to alternative culture. Located in an old shipyard, it is home to all kinds of artists and encourages its tenants to take part in building their own workshops and managing the space.

CONSTRUIRE AUTREMENT, 2006

"fewer regulations
for greater freedom"

Patrick Bouchain, architect

An architect for whom interaction is vital, Patrick Bouchain invented the 1% *solidaire* (setting aside 1% of project budget for participative initiatives) and implements participative projects that fully involve everyone concerned: from local inhabitants to councillors and from architects to craftsmen. He is interested in what he calls *laissés-pour-compte*, areas of land that have been 'left behind', and how they can be used as free spaces for initiative, interaction, and hospitality.

ECOBOULEVARD,

Madrid, Spain, 2007

Can a light-filled, empty public space designed to link together local residents really 'work' without some kind of urban landmark, without a specific function, and without a clearly defined meeting place?

EICHBAUM COUNTDOWN,
Eichbaum, Germany, 2010
Raumlabor, architects

Working in collaboration with local young people, Raumlabor have transformed the dilapidated and vandalized Eichbaum subway station into a meeting place and an events venue. It is also a way of testing out future utopias...

EXHIBITION

Urban Roots
Once Upon A Future
arc en rêve beyond the walls Les Abattoirs, Bordeaux
06.10.2011 – 18.12.2011

Following an invitation from Michelangelo Pistoletto,
artistic director, EVENTO 2011 Bordeaux
Part of EVENTO 2011, the urban and artistic rendezvous
06.10 – 16.10.2011
evento2011.com

Guest curators

STEALTH.unlimited
Ana Džokić, Marc Neelen
with Emil Jurcan (Pulska grupa)

Autors

Bruce Bégout, writer

Artists

François Ayroles
Adrien Demont
Camille Lavaud
David Prudhomme
Sandrine Revel
Havec
Guillaume Trouillard
Sainte-Machine + guests:
John Bobaxx, Dellastrada, Fanny Garcia, Kolona, Moam, Jack Usine

Isabelle Kraiser et Marc Pichelin (« Ici on travaille encore »)

Synopsis

STEALTH.unlimited and Emil jurcan

Exhibition design

Michel Jacques, artistic director arc en rêve
&
Le bureau baroque
Alan Gentil, Laurent Tardieu, architects
with Emmanuelle Jolivet, architect

Graphic design

For the fresco: Studio Tricolore

Damien Auriault, Yann Le Dluz, graphic designers

For the wall paintings, posters and on-site graphic works: Sainte-Machine

For the leaflet and booklet: Loup Niboyet, graphic designer

Exhibition organizers**arc en rêve centre d'architecture**

Francine Fort, general director

Michel Jacques, artistic director

Eric Dordan, architect, project lead

assisted by Helena Pomés, economist

with the collaboration of Nina Mansion, art history intern,

Fabien François, ENSAPBx intern, Virginie Baudrimont & Mathilde Rivoire, IEP interns

Cyrille Brisou, designer

Mediation project

Virginie Février, Eric Dordan, architects

assisted by Mathilde Rivoire, IEP intern

Special contribution

Zebra3

Quarantedeuxlignes

And the whole team at arc en rêve

graphic design: Emmanuelle Maura, Marie-Christine Mendy, graphic designers

technicians: Daniel le Herissé, Christophe Hautemanière

office of the general secretary: Nadine Gibault, Fabienne Signat,

Julie Maigret

administration: Marie Laure Wicker, Claire Medina

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distribution: Cécile Vanhooydonck, architect & urban designer, Aude Lourde Rocheblave

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Direction régionale des Affaires Culturelles d'Aquitaine
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Garage moderne, GPV, H'Nord, Le Jardin de ta sœur, Les Requins Marteaux,
Tout le Monde

Participants in discussions and meetings:
Samira Ait-Mehdi, Geneviève Andueza, Michel Aphenbero, Éric Audebert, Patrick Baggio,
Benjamin Chambelland, Alain Chiaradia, Sophie Courrian, Robert Coustet,
Delphine Costedoat, Stéphane Duprat, Bruno Fayolle-Lussac, Fanny Garcia,
Christophe Gautié, Patrice Godier, Maurice Goze, Bertrand Grimault, Christophe Hutin,
Isabelle Kraiser, Piou Lacoste, Claude Laroche, Sylvain Latizeau, Daniel Mandouze,
Florent Mazzolini, Etienne Parin, Olivier Ratouis, Lilian Saly, Véronique Siron,
Mimi Sporny, Jean-Étienne Surlève-Bazeille, Franck Tallon, Guy Tapie, Daniel Truong-Loi,
Rodolphe Urbs, Jack Usine, Agnès Vatican, Jean-Charles Zébo, Andrea Viglino

arc en rêve partners :
Aquitanis, Clairsienne, Domofrance, Fondation d'entreprise Bouygues Immobilier,
ingerop, Mésolia, Texaa, Tollens Materis peintures
+ Bordeaux Euratlantique

USEFUL INFORMATION

arc en rêve beyond the walls, for EVENTO 2011
Les Abattoirs,
Quais de Paludate 33800 Bordeaux

Tram Line C
get off at "Sainte-Croix" or "Gare Saint-Jean"

Opening times
October 6th – 11 am - 10 pm
October 6th - 16th – 11 am - 8 pm
October 17th - December 18th – 11 am - 7 pm

EVENTO mediation

Free – No booking required

Guided visits – October 7th - 16th

11 am – full visit (1 hour)

3 pm – quick visit (20 minutes)

6 pm – quick visit (20 minutes)

9 pm – visit with flashlights (45 minutes: please book in advance)

Post EVENTO mediation

1 000 000 posters, Imagining Bordeaux in 2030,
open workshop

Visits – October 17th - December 18th

First and third Wednesday of each month – full visit at 6:30 (1 hour)

Group visits – advance reservation required

Information and bookings:

www.arcenreve.com

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BOOKLET

This booklet is published to coincide with the exhibition *Il était une fois demain/Once Upon A Future* organized as part of EVENTO 2011, art for an urban re-evolution

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arc en rêve centre d'architecture
STEALTH.unlimited + Emil Jurcan

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