



Amateur
Cities

Connecting city thinkers
to city makers.

CITIES ARE NOT INVESTMENT MACHINES

*FUTURE ARCHITECTURE PLATFORM
LJUBLIANA 2016*

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Image by pingnews.com

'Over the past two centuries, the valorization of urban space has been a key accumulation strategy for capital and property rights have given capitalist firms relatively free reign to produce urban space to maximize its exchange value. The right to appropriation confronts capital's ability to valorize urban space, establishing a clear priority for the use value of urban residents over the exchange value interests of capitalist firms.'

– CASTELLS, 1977

– HARVEY, 1981

**HOW DOES
FINANCIALIZATION OF
URBAN SPACE TAKE SHAPE?**

MY HOME IS A COMMODITY!

New technologies allow for new forms of commodification. Apps like Airbnb or Uber pump up the exchange value of our homes, cars etc.



Image source: Airbnb

WHO OWNS THE CITIES?

Foreign investment in property continues to rise and change the structure of ownership in cities around the world. Is London still British if according to Saskia Sassen Qatari sheiks own more of the center than the Queen of England?

METRO	VOLUMES (US\$)	GROWTH*
1 London Metro, United Kingdom	29,370,466,865	37.67%
2 New York Metro, United States	11,364,607,926	68.53%
3 Paris, France	11,057,422,477	47.75%
4 Shanghai, China	10,039,035,493	150.25%
5 Sydney, Australia	6,660,953,814	75.81%
6 Los Angeles Metro, United States	5,994,728,581	65.09%
7 Shenzhen, China	4,968,623,569	426.35%
8 Tokyo, Japan	4,632,840,984	66.19%
9 Amsterdam/Randstad, Holland	3,991,616,088	248.30%
10 Melbourne, Australia	3,603,892,879	80.01%

Source: Saskia Sassen, lecture Geneva 2015 / Foreign Investment volumes Q3 2013 – Q2 2014

HOUSING PRICES GROW

In Holland the proportion of investment in real estate changed from 70% Dutch between 2004 and 2012 to 60% foreign between 2013 – 2014. Around 14.300 houses that have been sold for a total of 1.5 billion Euro, half of which came from the social housing sector.

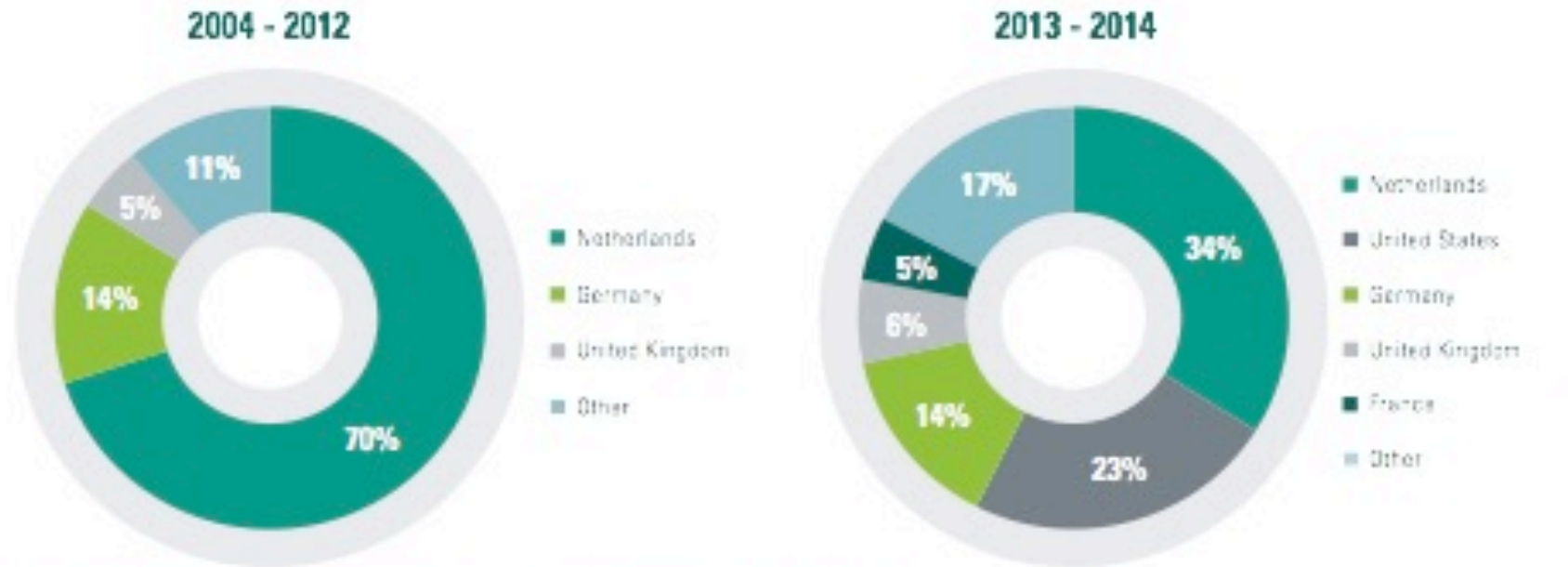


Figure 2. Origin foreign investors, period 2004 - 2012 en 2013 - 2014 (source: JLL, ABN AMRO)

IS A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD A HUMAN RIGHT?

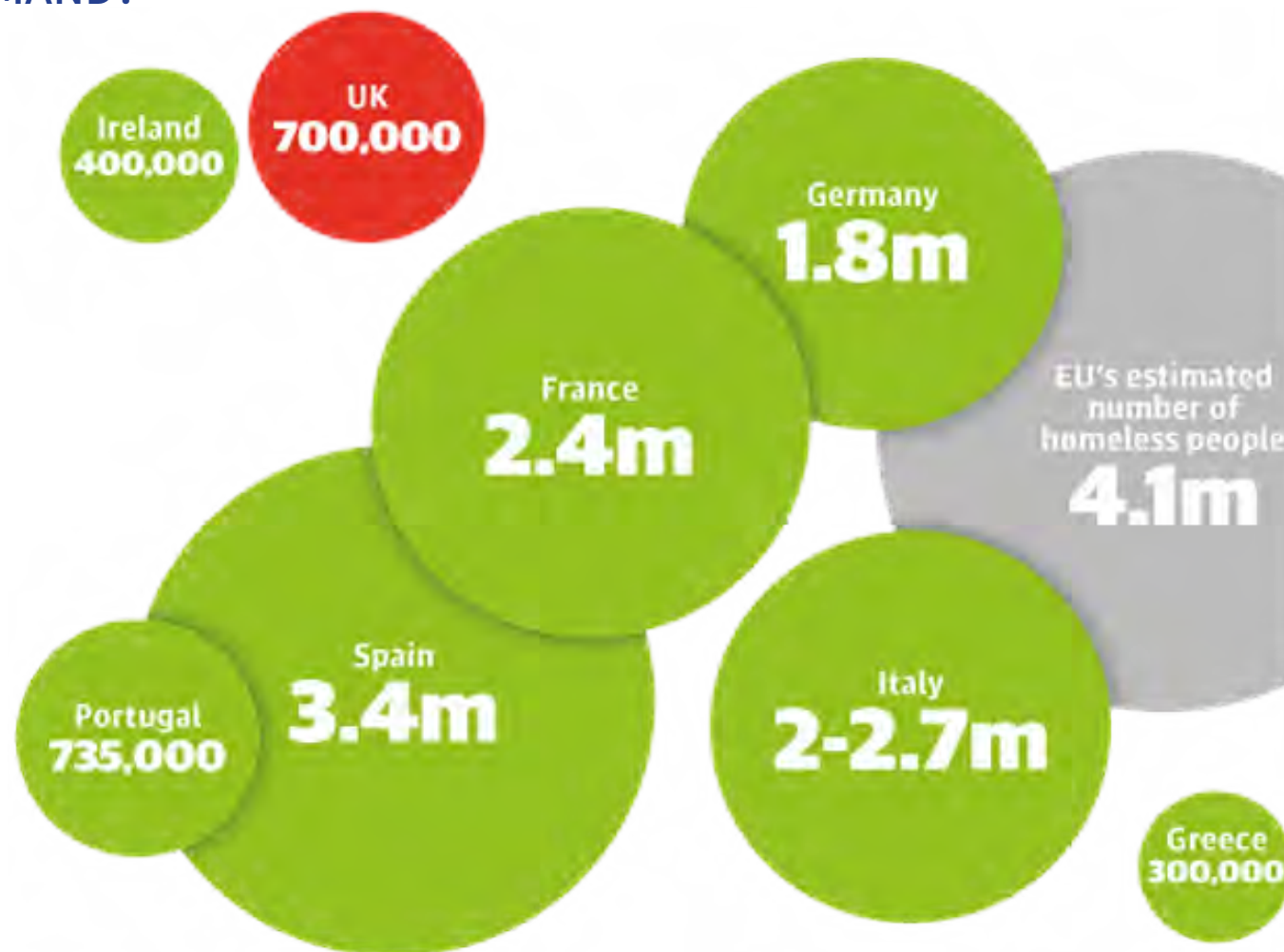
In Spain after the burst of the housing bubble resulting in mass evictions residents started occupation of vacant buildings known as the coralla movement. No people without houses, no houses without people) has become their official slogan.



Image source: Photograph: Dave Stelfox for the Guardian, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2013/mar/04/spanish-corralas-in-pictures>

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE ACTUAL DEMAND?

Europe has enough vacant homes to house all its homeless citizens.



SOURCES: UK: LEA DATA COLLATED BY THE EMPTY HOMES CAMPAIGN. SPAIN: 2011 CENSUS. FRANCE: INSEE GOVERNMENT RESEARCH BUREAU 2012. GERMANY: 2011 CENSUS. ITALY: ITALIAN STATISTIC INSTITUTE ESTIMATED 2.7M IN 2011. UNION CGIL ESTIMATED 2M IN 2012. PORTUGAL: 2011 CENSUS. IRELAND: IRISH NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF REGIONAL AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS (NIRSA) 2012. GREECE: HELLENIC PROPERTY FEDERATION (POMIDA) ESTIMATE 2012.



GOVERNMENTS BACK OUT

“While reducing the budget deficit was his “duty”, he said giving individuals and communities more control over their destinies was what excited him and was something that had underpinned his philosophy since he became Conservative leader in 2005.” – BBC News on launch of Cameron’s Big Society

**Work. Dishes.
Dressing the kids.
Now he wants you to
run the school and
hospital as well.**

What exactly will he be doing?



COMMUNITIES PICK UP

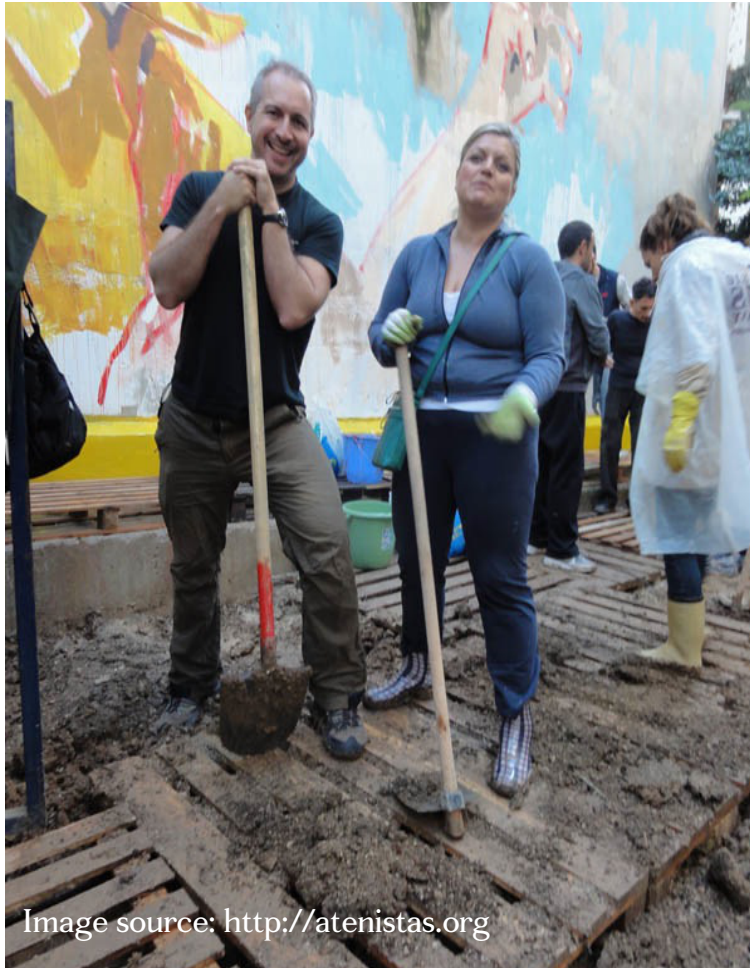


Image source: <http://atenistas.org>

In Athens volunteer workers transformed empty plots to a set of public squares

The bottom-up rhetoric diverts our attention away from commitments of the state and city governments.



Image source: Learning from Cairo, p.82

Al-Mu'tamidiya community in Cairo built four access ramps to the city's 45-mile ring road.

I needed to find myself a hobby so I decided I will count the rights that citizens are nowadays losing every single day mostly to the advantage of multinational corporations.



**AMATEURISM
IS AN ATTITUDE**

▼ ————— Dictionary —————

amateur | ˈamətər, -tər, -ˌCHōr, -CHər |

noun

a person who engages in a pursuit, especially a sport, on an unpaid basis.

• a person considered contemptibly inept at a particular activity: *that bunch of stumbling amateurs.*

adjective

engaging or engaged in without payment; nonprofessional: *an amateur archaeologist* | *amateur athletics.*

• inept or unskillful: *it's all so amateur!*

DERIVATIVES

amateurism | -ˌrizəm | noun

ORIGIN late 18th cent.: from French, from Italian **amatore**, from Latin **amator** 'lover,' from **amare** 'to love.'

▼ ————— Thesaurus —————

amateur

noun

1 *the crew were all amateurs*: NONPROFESSIONAL, nonspecialist, layman, layperson; dilettante; informal greenhorn.
ANTONYMS professional.

2 *what a bunch of amateurs*: BUNGLER, incompetent, bumbler. ANTONYMS expert.

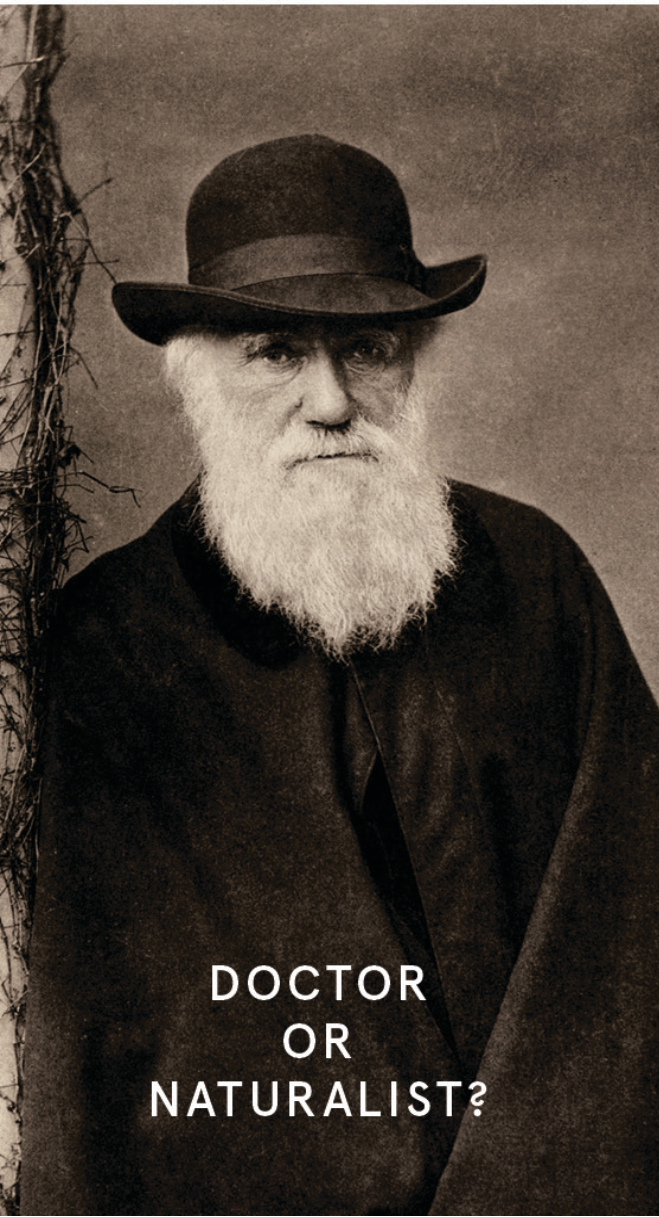
adjective

1 *an amateur sportsman*: NONPROFESSIONAL, nonspecialist, lay; dilettante.

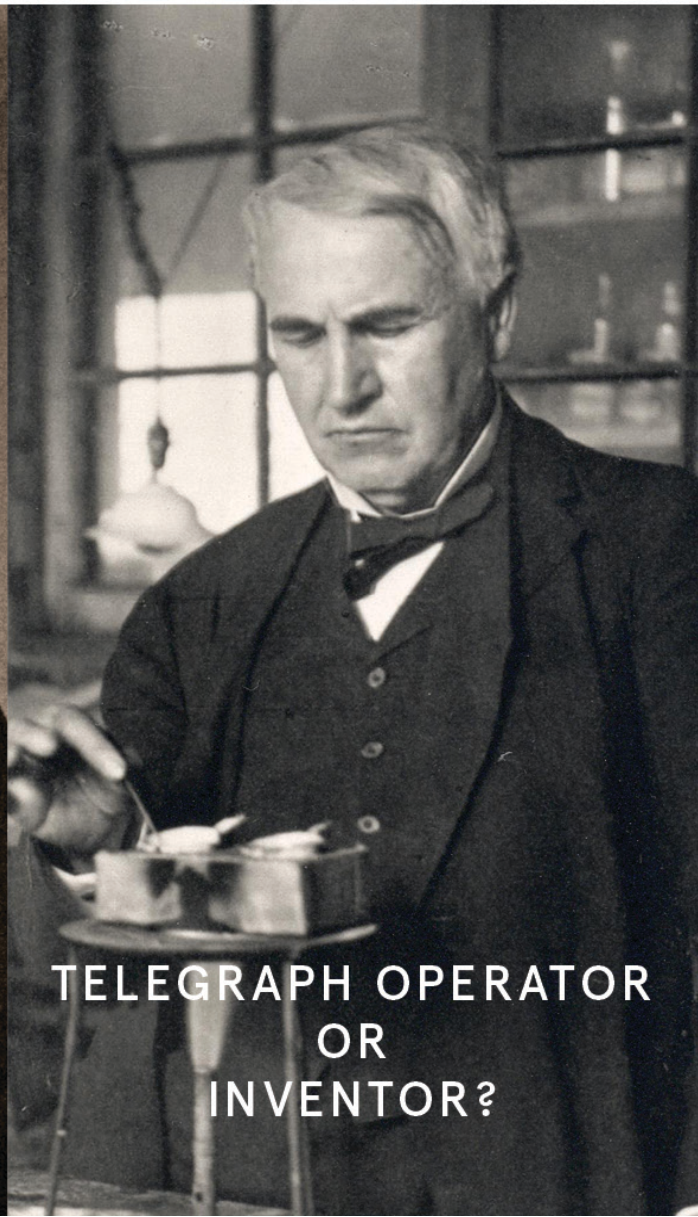
2 *their amateur efforts*: INCOMPETENT, inept, unskillful, inexperienced, amateurish, clumsy, maladroit, bumbling.

AMATEURS

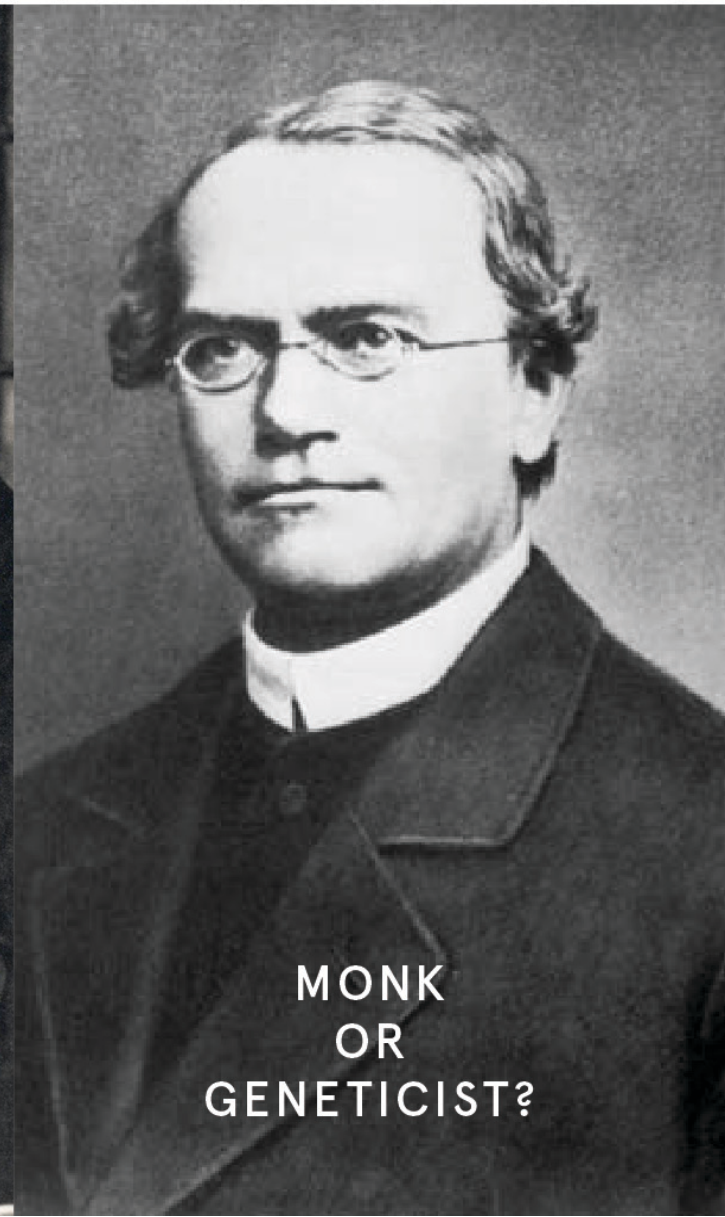
We tend to associate amateurs with people who are not professionals. But sometimes, that seems a bit unfair, doesn't it?



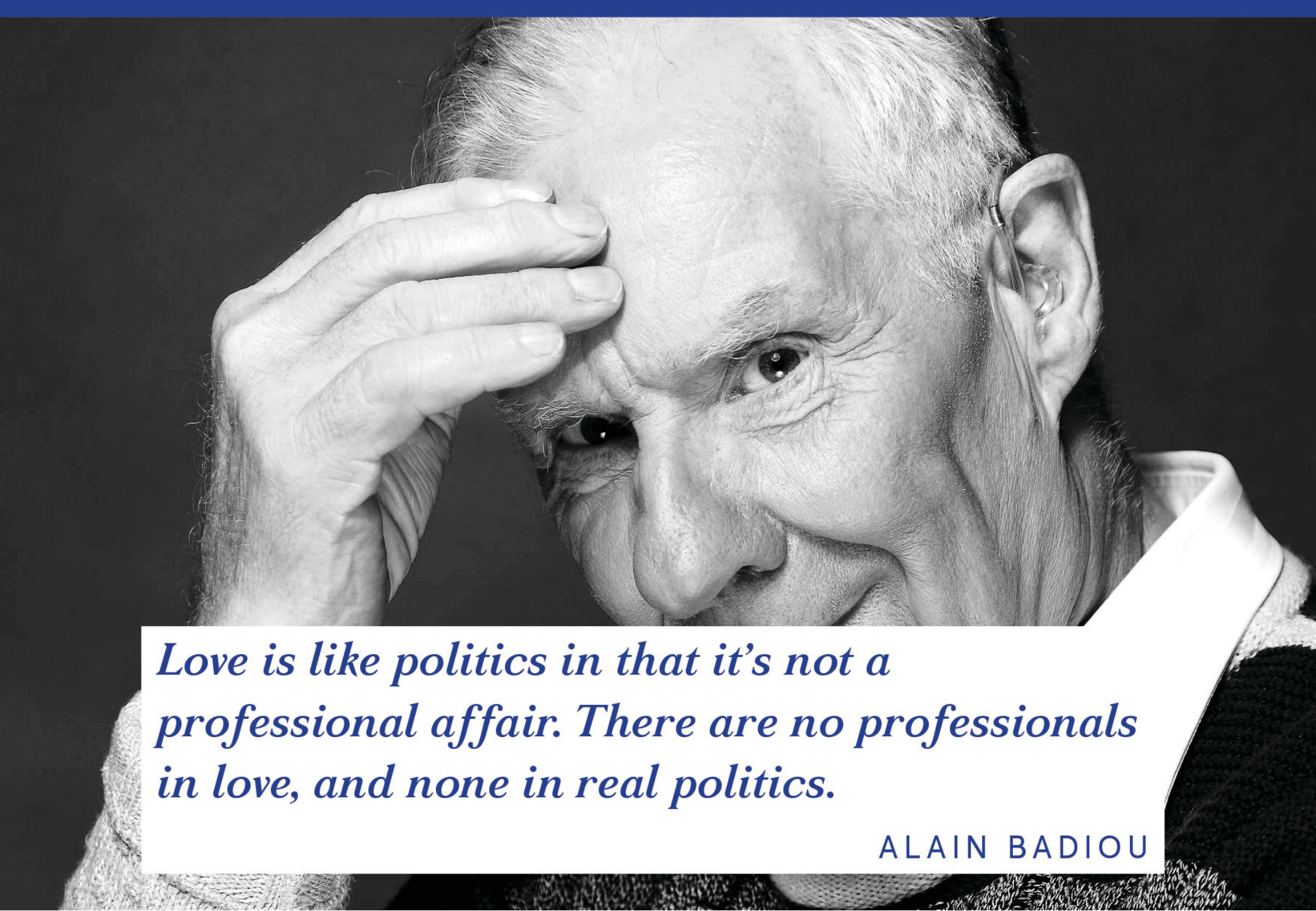
DOCTOR
OR
NATURALIST?



TELEGRAPH OPERATOR
OR
INVENTOR?



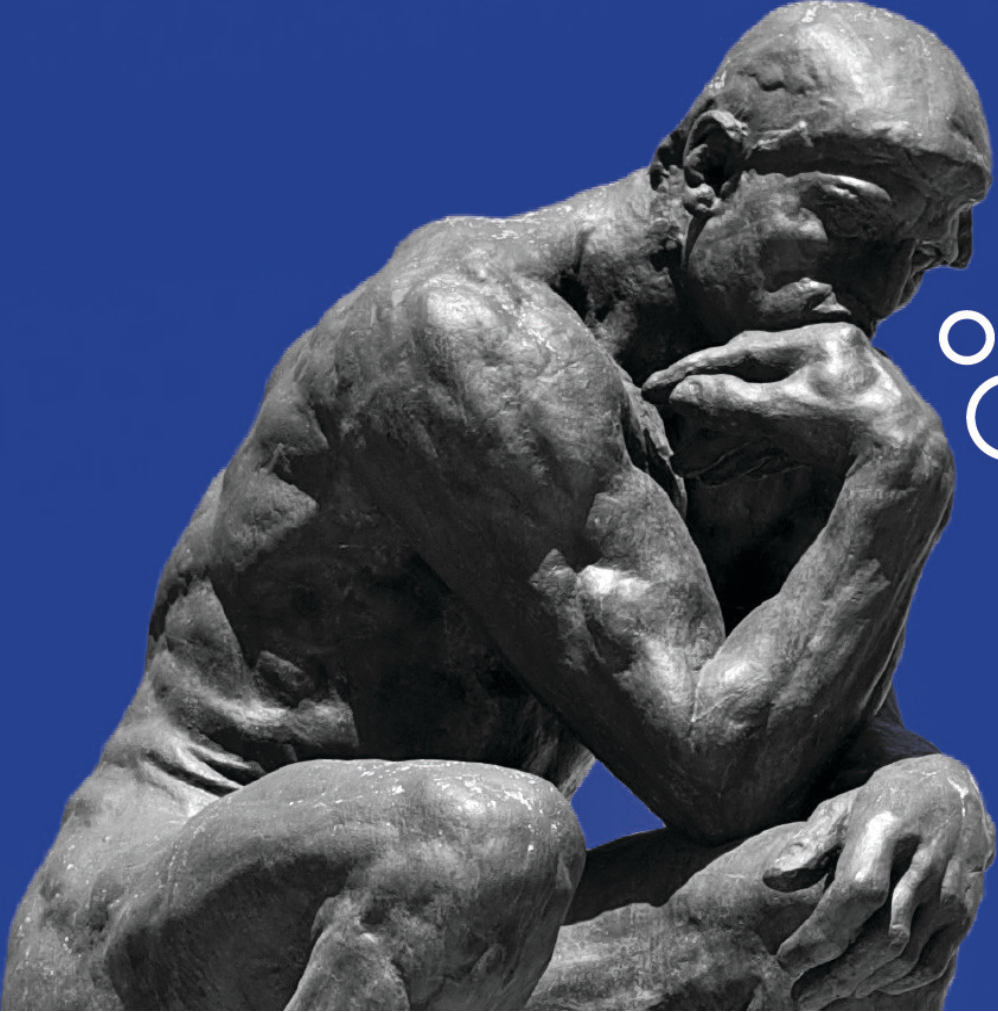
MONK
OR
GENETICIST?

A black and white close-up photograph of an elderly man. He has a serious, contemplative expression, with his right hand resting on his forehead. His skin is wrinkled, and his eyes are looking slightly off-camera. The background is dark and out of focus.

Love is like politics in that it's not a professional affair. There are no professionals in love, and none in real politics.

ALAIN BADIOU





What if you are stuck
behind your screen
with nothing to share?

What if the nanny
state would stop
taking care of us?

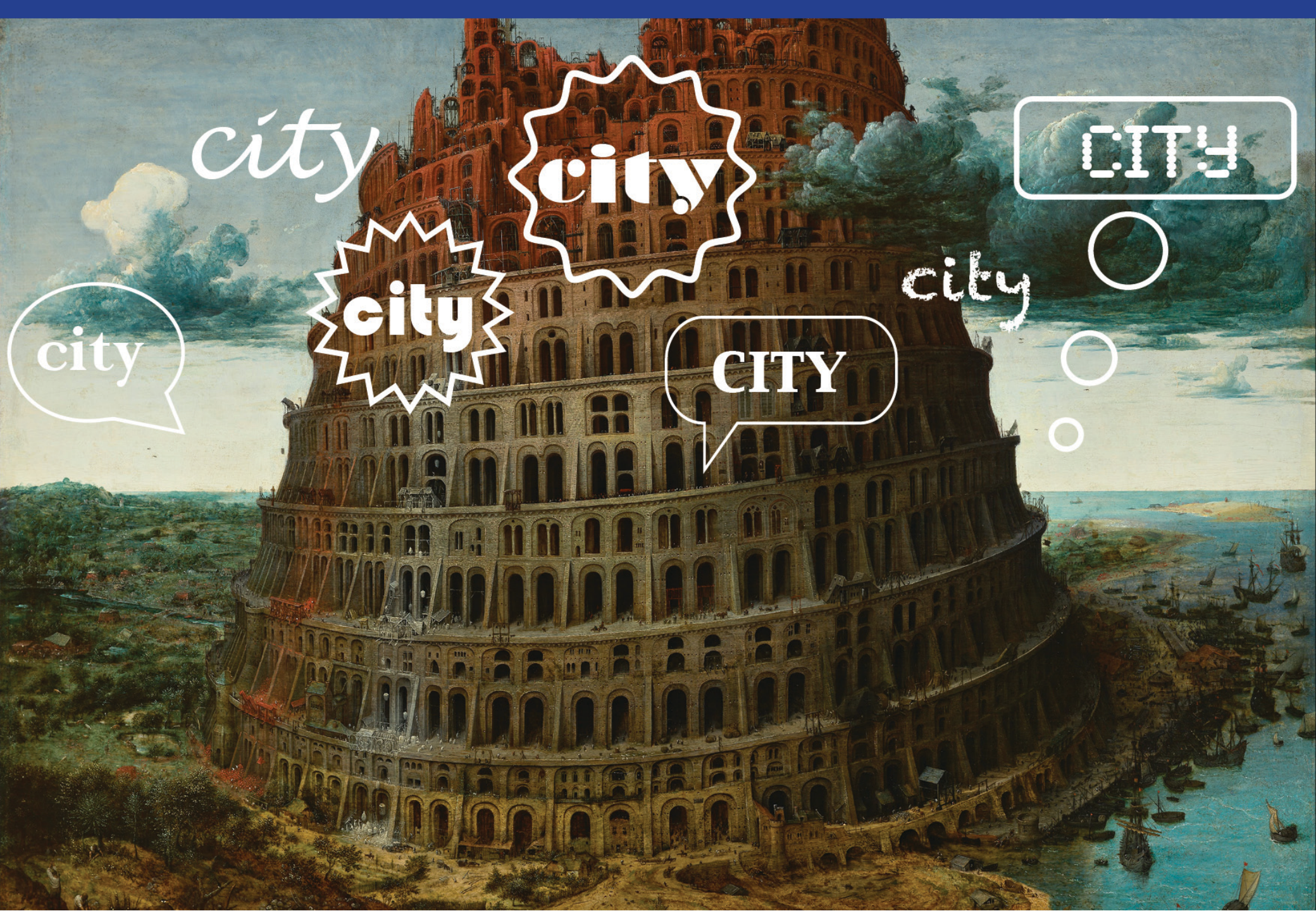
What if glitches would
manifest themselves in
the physical world?



Thinker



Doer



city

city

city

CITY

city

CITY

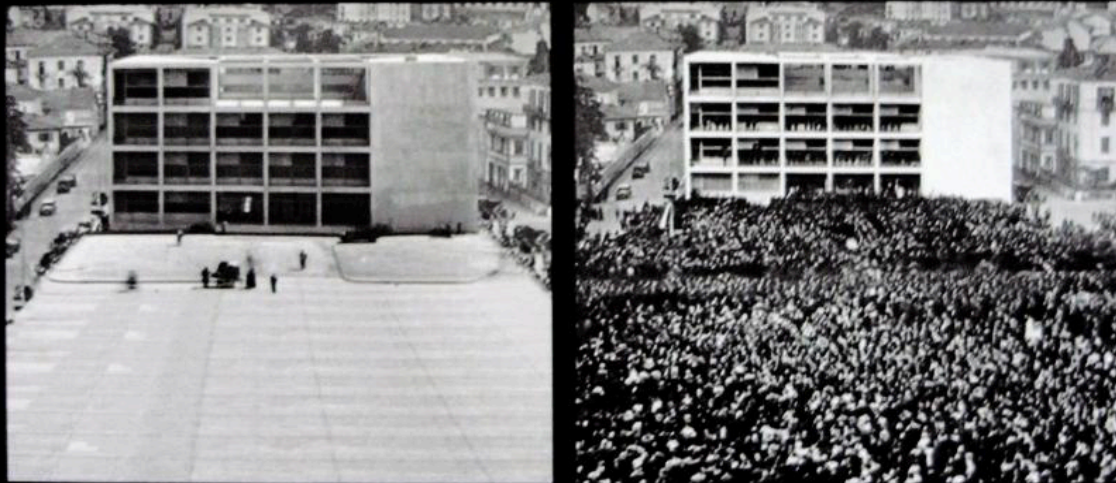
city

We Can Do It!



publications?
research?
exhibitions?
workshops?
debates?

common ground?



**Architecture is not about the conditions of design
but about the design of conditions.**

Bernard Tschumi, Advertisements for Architecture

EXPOSE HYPOCRISY

BRING THE MARGINALISED TO LIGHT

OCCUPY GREY ZONES

CREATE TEMPORARY COMMUNITIES

RAISE AWARENESS

PROVIDE THE TOOLS (for any of the above)

BE / BUILD THE ALTERNATIVE



2015

WISHFUL THINKING



GIUSEPPE LICARI

Wild Gold, 2014

What if nature would escape the exploitation and control imposed upon it in the cities?

[Read More >>](#)

CRITICAL IMAGINATION



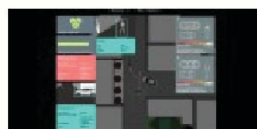
BRETT SCOTT

Bringing the Jungle to the City

The ambiguities of urban dynamics and the interfaces that connect and disconnect us from the larger context and from each other.

[Read More >>](#)

WISHFUL THINKING



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THANK YOU!

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