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# Archifutures

## The Museum

A field guide  
to the future  
of architecture

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## The Studio

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# L'ESP NOUVEAU

REVUE INTERNATIONALE ILLUSTRÉE DE L'ESTHÉTIQUE  
PARAISANT LE 15 DE CHAQUE MOIS  
ARTS LETTRES SCIENCES  
LITTÉRAIRE  
ARCHITECTURE PEINTURE SCULPTURE  
SCIENCE PURE ET APPLIQUÉE  
ESTHÉTIQUE EXPÉRIMENTALE ESTHÉTIQUE DE L'INFINI  
PHILOSOPHIE SOCIOLOGIE ÉCONOMIQUE SCIENCE  
VIE MODERNE THÉÂTRE SPECTACLES LES ARTS

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## SOMMAIRE

L'Esthétique sans Adieu, Ch. LAVA, 191
L'Art de Gaudin, E. CECIL, 199
Enquet, H. 215
L'Art de Whitman, L. BAZILLE, 221
Jean Geb, M. RAYNAL, 224
Appels de sens, Appels de sens, P. DERMIE, 230
Yague, G. ARVAY, 199
Les Trains Bénédictins, Le GÉNÉRAL SUCCHER, 241
Héges, P. RECH, 274
Profane Peinture, Léon ROSENBERG, 178
Esthétique Musicale, H. 245
Phéologie, DALLÉ, 149

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## SOMMAIRE

Le Peuple, OUBAYE et JEANNERET, 285
Ingros, BISTON, 247
Deuxième Étape et de Noël, SOMMEL, 199
De l'Art et de la Poésie Noble, Henri TROUPEL, 511
De l'importance de nouvelles conventions de Typogra- phie normale, G. ROUET, 119
Les Grands Concerts, H. COLLET, 123
Formes Lignes, M. RAYNAL, 127
L'Esthétique de Proust, H. CECIL, 143
Parade, Albert JEANNERET, 117

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## SOMMAIRE

La Méthode et la Esthé- tique de l'Esthétique, Jules LAFITTE, 217
Vie de l'homme Théos, copié El Greco, VANDER, 249
Deux dimensions fon- ctionnelles d'appa- ritions, Jean BENOIST, Gaspard et Malherbe, EUGÈNE MILLET, 240
Le Musée en France et ailleurs, L.-L. FROSTIGAT, 297
Maximalité, La dans l'histoire, F.-Y. MATHIEU, 294
Appétitions, Georges BOUR, 300
Éloge esthétique des Jardi- niers de l'Herminette, 311
Roger de La Fontaine, Jean CECIL, 311
Les Échelles Théolo- giques, 324
Prose - Lyrique - Art, Paul DENREZ, 327

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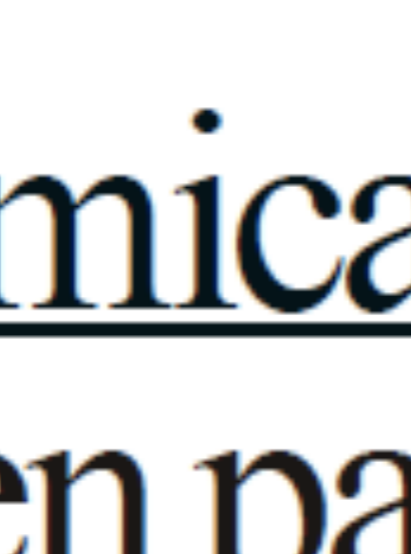
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Le Hygiène des Albert JEANNERET, 311
Le Musée des Arts Décora- tifs de l'Italie, Gérard CECIL, 328
Le Typographe, CAMILLE, 341
Cléris, Louis DALLÉ, 349
Le Musée de l'Art, Benoist, 352
Deux les Échelles, Fernand DENREZ, 355
Les grands Concerts, Henri COLLET, 357
Les Trains, Gérard ARVAY, 359
La Littérature de l'Art - 1915, Louis CECIL, 341
Les Expositions, VANDER, 347
Éloge de la dernière lettre, 344
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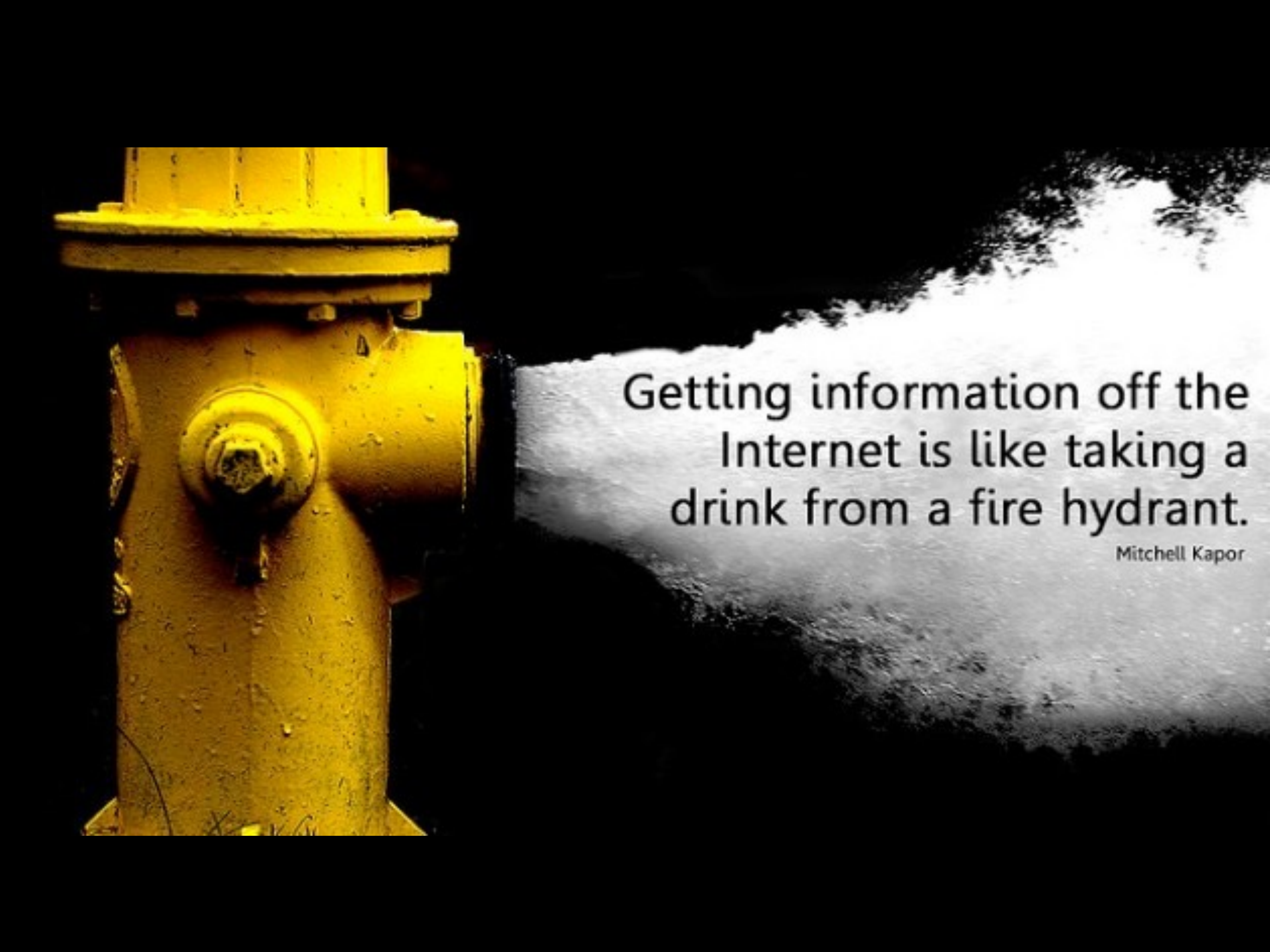
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CONSTRUCTING  
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OASE  
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MAXI  
M

TOUCHING ARCHITECTURE

PRESTON BL

A close-up photograph of a yellow fire hydrant. A thick, white stream of water is spraying from the side of the hydrant, creating a large, bright plume that dominates the right side of the frame. The background is solid black, which makes the yellow hydrant and the white water stand out sharply. The hydrant has a textured, metallic appearance with some visible bolts and a small circular opening on its side.

Getting information off the  
Internet is like taking a  
drink from a fire hydrant.

Mitchell Kapor



*Internet Map*  
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# Archifutures

*Archifutures* is the publishing project that accompany the activities of the Future Architecture platform, a multi volume field guide to the future of architecture.

**Archifutures** merges the possibilities of critical editorial, innovative printing, and active user intervention. The collection maps contemporary architectural practice and urban planning, presented through the words and ideas of some of its key players and change-makers. From institutions, activists, thinkers, curators and architects to urban bloggers, polemicists, critics and publishers, **Archifutures** presents the people shaping tomorrow's architecture and cities – and thereby helping to shape our societies of the future as well.

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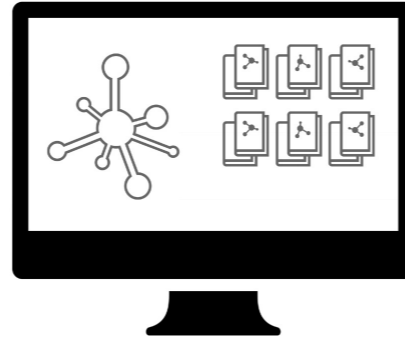
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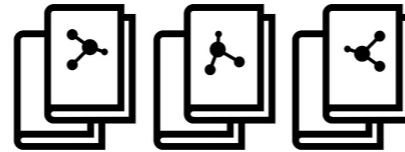
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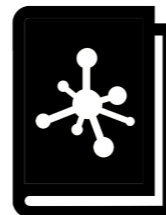
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# Beyond the Biennial Bubble

Three festivals,  
three approaches



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**Learning by Doing**  
**On reaching the public and learning from mistakes**

Interview by Nick Axel

Learning By Doing

Wrocław

“The driving force is to provide a medium for boosting architectural consciousness and as a consequence the sense of responsibility for our common spaces, heritage or environment.”

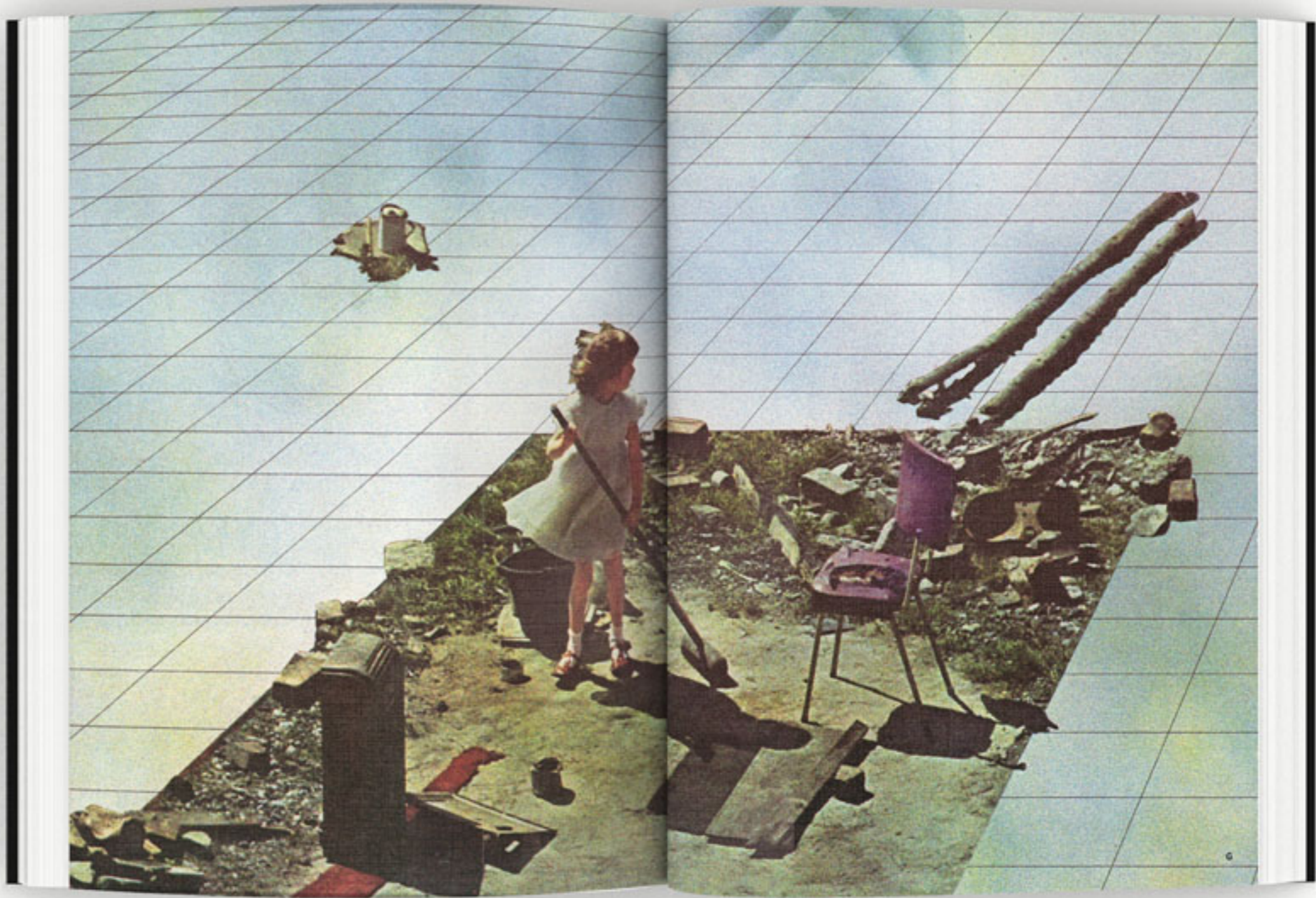
38



**Museum  
of Architecture,  
Wrocław**

Michał Duda is a curator  
at the Wrocław Museum  
of Architecture.

It deals primarily with the  
history of architecture and  
urban planning in Poland,  
as well as international  
contemporary architecture.  
The museum is also actively  
forming an architectural  
archive and has a publicly  
accessible collection  
of architectural drawings  
and documents (from the  
sixteenth century onwards),  
photographs, stone samples,  
sculptures, graphics, stained  
glass, and ceramics. This  
collection serves as the base  
for numerous exhibitions and  
publications. The museum  
presents over 20 different  
exhibitions each year, and  
realises various programmes  
and events aimed at  
professional architects,  
historians and the general  
public.







# Where Have All the Flowers Gone?



Architecture  
after the future

By Ana Jeinić

Piketty has been viewed as a Marxist. This is wrong. Where Marx saw social relationships and class struggles, Piketty sees only economic categories: wealth and income. Marx envisaged proletariat rule through revolution. Piketty's views are rather apolitical. Indeed, if Piketty's analysis is at all political, it is only because he recognises the relevance of political choices in the context of signalling capital's natural tendency towards inequality, which is best countered when the opposition between political sides is prolonged without end. In this view, the emancipating achievements of the twentieth century owe their existence largely to a contest between opposing political camps and would last only as long as victory for any one party is suspended.



Unité d'habitation, Marseille  
Project by Le Corbusier  
© Addison Godet

Thus does the concept of struggle itself move to the centre, not as struggle between social classes, but as a form of necessary agonistic pressure on the system... perhaps even an indispensable part of the system itself, one that can never relent if the system is to remain progressive. "Except in struggle, there is no more beauty", wrote the Futurist Marinetti, followed by: "No masterpiece without an aggressive character."<sup>23</sup>

Also here an interesting echo with the Modern Movement emerges. Modern architecture is invariably considered to be political, but by and large its political life has proved promiscuous. Italian Fascism was a sponsor of Modern architecture, as was Communism until Stalin. Le Corbusier served both the USSR and the Vichy regime. It is mostly in a desire to overthrow the old that commonalities between these systems can be found: a shared belief that whatever the consequences of action are, the consequences of inaction would be greater. In hindsight then, the social



Chandigarh, India,  
project by Le Corbusier  
© Addison Godet

But the fascination with ruination doesn't stop with contemplation, it has affected renovations and even new constructions as well.

**“Decay sells well.”**



Previous page: FactoryMitt  
Basement, Berlin.  
© Ron Schmidt

This page: FactoryMitt  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Berlin.  
© Ron Schmidt

This is how the architectural profession has acknowledged and utilised the speculative appeal of destruction and decay. Gentrification projects mostly happen in former industrial areas for a reason. A broken window here, a rusty crane there, an empty industrial hall with railroad tracks in the middle – decay sells well. For these buildings with carefully preserved or even reconstructed

traces of abandonment are at the same time some of the most expensive real-estate, occupied by multinational companies, “shabby chic” coffee houses and luxury industrial lofts. Keeping an old structure seemingly abandoned, whilst at the same time occupying it with new functions, captures and expands the aesthetic sensation into the realm of uncanny. An architect in this context has become a necromancer, conjuring uncertainty: “whether an apparently animate being is really alive, or conversely, whether a lifeless object might not be in fact animate”.<sup>2</sup> Switch the term “being” with “object” and you get the explanation of the fascination with post-industrial gentrification in a nutshell.

But the ruin is an ultimately ambiguous object; its allegiance tends to shift when one is not looking. Its meaning turns out to be impossible to control in the long run. The rubble that to an entrepreneur signifies future opportunities can easily be regarded as a social or environmental disaster to others. Perhaps it is possible then to turn the dilemma of the ruin on its head; maybe the ruin, apart from being the ultimate speculative opportunity, also carries in it a seed of the critique against nihilistic speculative necromancy of decay. Articulation of such a critique means turning the object (ruin) – with its surplus of history and speculative future but lack of the present – into an object (ruin) filled with present value. It becomes the task of discarding the speculative element of the ruin – which basically means eliminating its potential. Only a building with a zero speculative future can be inhabited in the present, such as it is. Since architects are usually regarded as developers of potential rather than its eliminators, this means we’re talking about a structural hindrance of the whole profession.

<sup>2</sup> Jentsch, Ernst. “On the Psychology of the Uncanny.” *Angelaki* 2, 1995, p. 11.

No Future  
Architectural practice for the living present

By Matias Echanove and Rahul Srivastava

No Future

“We are now forced to see our future as something that must be carved out of the present; pragmatically, incrementally and tactically.”

26

Archifutures

Matias Echanove and Rahul Srivastava of the URBZ collective believe the architectural profession needs to stop projecting instrumental, utopian solutions for the future, and engage pragmatically with messy reality as it unfolds – they propose a new way of practice that would be far more radical and optimistic with their call for architects to get tooled-up, get back in the field and get their hands dirty. And they are leading by example.



Seen from Mumbai, an urban agglomeration of about 20 million people, which generates 20 per cent of India's GDP, architecture seems like a nice idea that, along with countless other social ambitions, has found little resonance in the contemporary world.

URBZ

URBZ is an experimental research and action collective founded by Matias Echanove and Rahul Srivastava, with collaborators in Mumbai, Goa, Geneva, New York, Bogotá and São Paulo. Since 2008, URBZ has organised collaborative workshops, conducted field research, generated ideas and projects and produced web content about urban space and places. URBZ believes that residents are experts in their neighbourhoods and develops concepts, tools methodologies that allow architects, urbanists and policymakers to tap into that knowledge pool.

Echanove and Srivastava are also the co-directors of the Institute of Urbanology, which has offices in Mumbai and Goa, India. They have authored numerous essays and commentaries and their work has been exhibited from MoMA in New York to the MAXXI in Rome and the São Paulo Cultural Center.

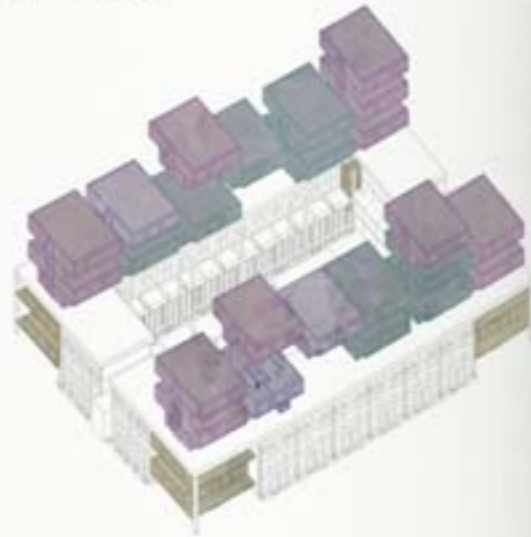
Matias Echanove studied government and economics at the London School of Economics, urban planning at Columbia University, and urban information systems at the University of Tokyo. Rahul Srivastava studied social and urban anthropology in Mumbai, Delhi and Cambridge, UK.

Previous and this page: Mahatma Gandhi Road in Dharavi, Mumbai is a flood of activities. Photo: Julien Gegerio 2013 © URBZ

27

### Intimate Infrastructures

resilient and adaptable model in the city fabric. The spatial configuration responds to the changing nature of family structures and work patterns, for instance the increase in adult children returning to the family home in the face of the housing crisis.



Toolkit for Modular Typologies and Spatial Principles: shared house typologies. © Natasha Reid

An adaptable frame structure above street level contains the shared homes, which can change, grow and recede according to future needs. Within this, individual dwellings are articulated and vertical elements give rhythm to the street and a human scale to the city - differentiating them from the usual model for mass housing of monolithic, uniform blocks.

### Communities of place

The collision of different tenures and groups reflects the heterogeneous city; the proposal provides a range of different conditions to suit people at different stages in life, incomes and lifestyle preferences. It seeks to interlock

### Archifutures

two types of community, not "pepper potting" them but allowing opportunities for interaction through mixing space for social activities. In order to create a closer, denser layout of households, shared space is emphasised and privacy provided by the careful treatment of boundaries.

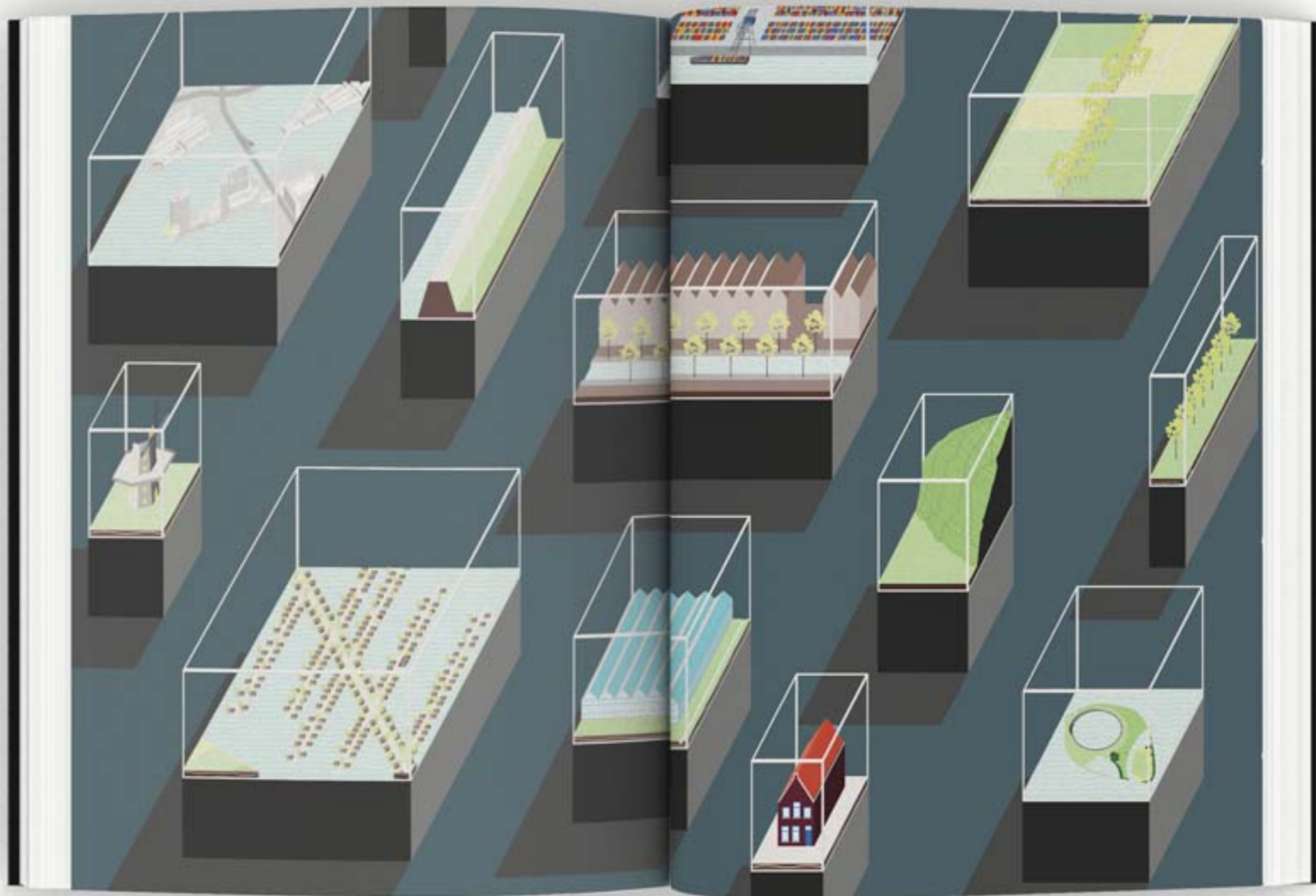
This framework approach provides the physical infrastructure for urban densification, while simultaneously setting up a social infrastructure to support strong communities. The project considers the in-between spaces to be as important as the buildings themselves. The areas between interior and exterior allow for overlapping spaces and functions, and subsequently different social groups. Shared spaces are provided for people to appropriate and collectively shape, increasing the number of their chance encounters and facilitating wider participation in civic and communal life.



### Building connectedness

**"This project considers the in-between spaces to be as important as the buildings themselves."**

Toolkit for Modular Typologies and Spatial Principles: network of passages and "in-between" spaces. © Natasha Reid





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