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Cantina

nº 2 JUN 2021

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1 FOG MACHINE 900W

acumulació de fum en una aula teòrica
permet visualitzar i calcular de **manera empírica** la repercusió d'un estornut sense mascareta en un espai tancat



1 persona parlant

nivell de ventilació mitja
càrrega de risc triga 6 min
360 seg a dissipar



1 estornut

nivell de ventilació mitja
càrrega de risc triga 5 h
3600 seg a dissipar

COM AUGMENTAR
LES INTERACCIONS
EN UN ANY
DE PANDÈMIA?

TRENQUEM LES AULES



Portàtil (carrogat)
Quarapè
Estoig
Pantofla
Gel -hidroalcoholic
Capota
Mòbil
Roba d'abric
Càmera fotogràfica
Flis on banc
Cinta adhesiva
Cinta mètrica

Mascareta
200x100g
Inclusa en l'equip
d'ambulador

Cavira
100x100x100
Càmera fotogràfica
200g

Maqueta
Pantofla
Aparador de
l'ordinador
Mòbil

Tub d'oxigen
700g x 2 Kg
Inclusa en l'equip de
ambulador

Mòbil
200g x 12Kg
Càmera fotogràfica

Paraguai
200g x 2Kg
Inclusa en l'equip de
ambulador



#LEARNING FROM
UNDETHE BRIDGE

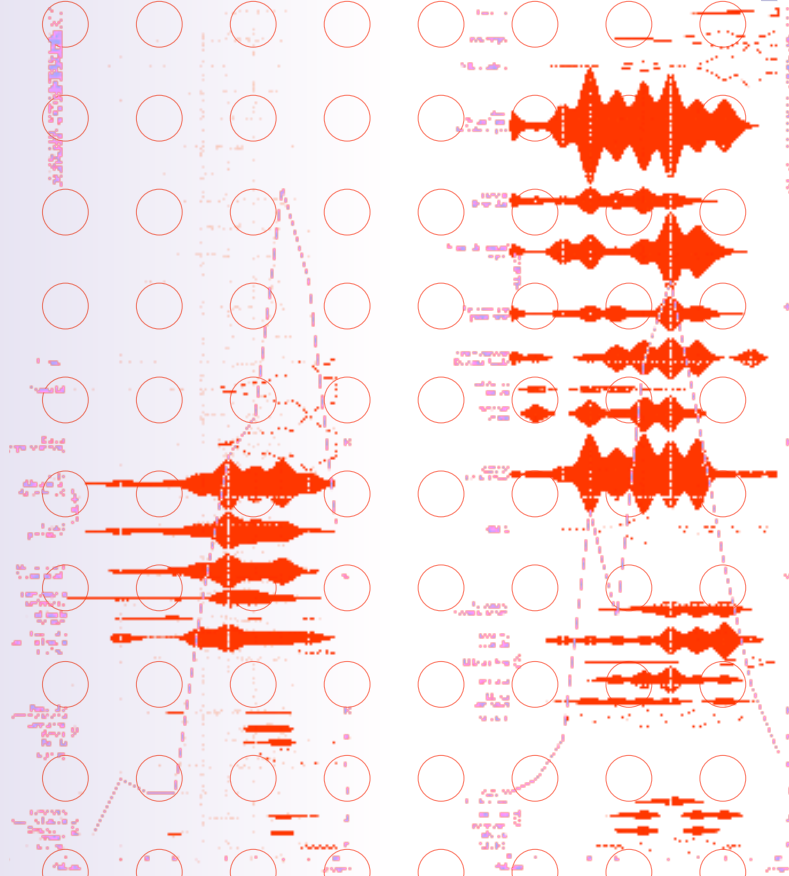
Limitar l'activitat de la universitat a un espai físic queda obsolet dins el context del Covid19.

L'aposta per una docència i comprensió de l'espai públic alternatives obliga a definir un nou tipus d'estudiant.

L'ESCOLA ESPAI DE RELACIÓ

35

BENVENIDU



#LEARNING FROM PEDAGOGY

Enquestes de nivell de malestar de l'estudiantat durant el confinament.

L'ESTUDIANT NÒMADA

escuchando se da cuenta de que lo que estamos hablando hasta ahora... los dos estamos un poco preocupados porque sí que hay un cambio de época. Acentuado por lo del Covid y todo eso, pero que ya venía de antes. Y a ver cómo pillamos la sincronía. ¿Sabes lo que quiero decir?

Sí.

Que de alguna manera estamos en un proceso de cambio que ya no es de cajas, que creo que va más con tema de relatos y cuerpos y que a ver cómo la arquitectura lo acaba recogiendo. ¡El arte no lo sé tampoco eh! Estamos un poco perdidos. Yo creo que estamos en un momento de agotamiento de entusiasmo. Que se ve acelerado por el agotamiento visual de Instagram, de todo este alimento, esta cosa repetitiva y machacona. Es un agotamiento, hay que explorar, buscar. El otro día compré una planta para un amigo que inauguraba su casa, y le pregunté a la señora como se riega, no vayamos a matar la planta el primer mes. Y entonces la señora me dijo: «no, tú tienes que meter el dedo en la tierra, como 10 centímetros y si en la punta del dedo notas humedad no la riegues». Y me pareció que era súper contemporáneo, en el sentido en el que yo estoy de alguna forma, torpemente, buscando para construir mi posición ¿no? No

es tanto ya ver si las hojas están amarillas o arriba o abajo. Sino ya era meter el dedo, ya tenías que usar otras herramientas de percepción distintas. Y yo creo que desde mi punto de vista lo que busco es algo así. Yo creo que aquí hay una pregunta. Que la tenemos que responder porque en dos minutos esto se va a...

Vale.

¿La quieres leer tú?

No, tu.

Es para los dos: «¿es distinto el acercamiento desde la novela, la poesía o desde el ensayo? ¿es peligroso acercarse desde el ensayo? hay malas interpretaciones de la arquitectura queer». ¡Mamma mia! De eso no hemos hablado demasiado. Responde tú María por favor.

¿Es peligroso acercarse a la arquitectura desde el ensayo? No. Lo que es peligroso es leer ensayos como si fuese palabra del señor, yo creo. En todos los momentos de la historia los humanos tienen esta necesidad de... si ya no es ir al cura que te diga y te confirme algunas de tus intuiciones, pues vas al coach o al psicólogo. O a un texto que sigas, que tú le preguntas al oráculo cosas y entonces te responde frases y tú tienes ciertas certezas. Porque hay una necesidad de tener certezas para avanzar. Pero también se puede avanzar sin certezas. ¿Se puede entrar desde el ensayo? Sí. Yo sinceramente creo que es importante no tenerle respeto a ningún ensayo y no creer nada.

Y no tomarlo como guía.

No. Más irreverente.

Yo en mi práctica artística intento... estar al desfoco de la sincronía que a mí me

gusta. No tanto de los ensayos de los que habla ahora sino de los que se hablaba hace más años. Estamos a punto de terminar, yo creo eh, porque quedan 20 segundos. No sé si nos tenemos que despedir.

¿Nos vemos este fin de semana no?

Nos vemos el fin de semana porque voy a Madrid. Y bueno, muchas gracias, perdonad por el inicio y... han quedado muchas cosas pendientes ¿no? Pero bueno, ya lo hablaremos en otro formato.

Bueno David, un placer.

Igualmente, hablamos. ¡Hasta luego!

¡Hasta luego!

María Langarita es doctora en arquitectura, y profesora en la ETSAM. Cofundadora del estudio Langarita Navarro.

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Deriva d'inici de curs TAP-IV a cota pandèmia (45cm),
febrer 2021, 18 carrers amb noms de ciutats amb el màxim PIB a Barcelona.



resources



CURRO CLARET LIONEL DEVLIEGER

Ok hello, so. I understand we should start this thing now

Yes

Ok, um... Hello everybody, muy buenas tardes, good afternoon, bon jour. I have to read this: this is episode two , organized by ETSAV, Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura del Vallès, and this is the second session. This is Lionel and myself Curro and we are gonna talk and then we will have 15min open discussion to any of you that feels like doing uncomfortable and difficult questions. And then we'll have three minutes to say bye-bye. So, yeah, I guess we just move as this thing is going on. Ok let's go!

All right!

Lionel, I'm very happy to meet you again obviously

Likewise!

And actually, here's my first question, no introduction needed, I would say. Ok, I'm gonna read it, Lionel: *Rotor is an organization boarding the practice and working, offering many different services* - maybe you want to comment briefly on that - and then, what I was particularly interested, you know, since you're doing so many different things going on: How is Rotor organized and how are the connections among these different projects you're doing? And actually, how much these different projects in Rotor feed each other?

Okay, well, I'm glad to be able to walk around with my camera for the moment

when you ask the question how Rotor is organized and what we do. So, I was sitting in the showroom of Rotor DC, the branch of rotor that became an autonomous company a few years ago, and which is completely specialised in dismantling components from buildings that need to be demolished, cleaning and preparing them for reuse, and then reselling them. And so, what you see behind me is the shop, so this is the counter - at midday so there's nobody there -, where the actual selling occurs. Behind me you see the showroom where people can walk around and discover the elements that are being sold. Now, that is our Rotor DC; if I walk a few meters further we will enter the offices of Rotor, let's say, the non-profit organization. So this is a more traditional office space, and just to give a peek without disturbing my colleagues... So yeah, you have to know... maybe I can say a little bit about the building we're in. This is a former chocolate factory. Normally it looks like an empty warehouse but we installed our buildings, our facilities in here to do what we need to do. We are doing a variety of things; it's design projects - like interior design projects -, it's research, it's consultancy, accompanying a big company that wants to integrate salvaged materials in their realisation.

So for them

Mies

pedro urzaiz

En S.M.L.XL. Koolhaas escribe un texto autobiográfico al principio del libro, el texto explica por una parte el ambiente de élite familiar relacionada con las más avanzadas vanguardias del siglo XX de las que él vivía rodeado en su infancia, su padre era un periodista que viajará a Indonesia tres años con el objetivo de profundizar en temas de los independentistas Indonecios respecto a Holanda mientras, su madre era una artista que diseñaba escenografías. Aquel texto también tenía la necesidad por darnos a conocer un interés crítico hacia un enorme personaje arquitectónico, también por el valor y el relato de las aventuras fracasadas deudoras de una práctica y como muchas veces los destinos se truncan por pequeños detalles, y por supuesto su conocimiento de los personajes trascendentes en la construcción de la historiografía del siglo XX. A mediados de los 50' diversas circunstancias familiares entre las que no faltaban las económicas, habían aconsejado a sus padres cuando vuelven de Yakarta a dejar al pequeño Rem a vivir dos años en casa de su abuelo arquitecto; Dirk Roosenburg, la casa de su abuelo era una copia casi exacta de la "Casa Robie" de F.L. Wright, algo muy usual en ciudades europeas o americanas a donde volvían discípulos del maestro y que así mostraban su legado. A esa misma edad y en aquella casa ya se sabe de memoria, por repetida una historia que le había contado su madre pero que aquí le cuenta su abuela materna sobre una amiga de juventud: Mme. H.E.L.J. Kroller dueña junto a su marido de una de las colecciones de arte moderno más conocidas de Europa; la colección Kroller-Muller tenía hasta veintisiete Van Goghs colgados en sus paredes, Mondrian, Matisse o Picasso y que después de haber probado con innumerables arquitectos el proyecto de una casa que albergara su residencia y colección acudieron al estudio de Peter Behrens en Berlín en la primavera de 1911, (Mies Van der Rohe. Philip Johnson. Pág. 16), en aquel tiempo el arquitecto de más renombre en Europa, allí estaba también como jefe de oficina un joven Walter Gropius que todavía no había desplegado sus enormes garras sobre la historia de la arquitectura, la obra recayó sobre los hombros de un joven arquitecto que primero fue a Holanda, a Otelo concretamente a visitar el lugar y conocer las necesidades y colección de los clientes. Pasaron varios meses entre la visita inicial a la oficina principal, la presentación de bocetos y sus tópicas conversaciones hasta que la señora Kroller decidió que el joven arquitecto viajará con ellos a su casa de Holanda, se instalará allí y

que la relación y producción del proyecto fuera exclusiva. Así se hizo, de tal forma que después de un año de estancia en Holanda la relación profesional se hizo tan intensa que era una falacia conceder autoría a la oficina de Beherens, por lo cual el joven arquitecto se quedó con el encargo. En aquel momento el proyecto estaba tan definido que el joven, en vista de las dudas que presentaba la clienta se ofreció a hacer una maqueta a escala 1:1 en lienzo y situarla exactamente en el terreno ya que esta no tenía muy claro ni el tamaño del proyecto ni su posición. El resultado de la acción no pudo ser más desalentador, la casa según la clienta se desparramaba por el paisaje hasta acercarse a los límites del terreno que coincidían con la línea de ferrocarril cercana a esos dominios, hay fotografías de la instalación como la que figuró en el catálogo de una Exposición que organizó Philip Johnson en el MoMA en 1947, en donde se puede ver una figura misteriosa, acaso se reconoce al mismo joven arquitecto, observando la casa mientras no se ven las vías del tren por ninguna parte. Después de este desencuentro la señora Kroller liquidó el encargo y se dedicó a buscar otro arquitecto –incluso el abuelo arquitecto de Koolhaas podría haber participado en este “casting”- hasta dar con Henry Van der Velde que fue quien finalmente la proyectó. *Fue años más tarde, en Nueva York, que entendí quien había sido el arquitecto (desafortunado) de la historia de mi abuela. ¿Cómo y dónde había encontrado a esta rica mujer mayor un arquitecto tan joven? Ni siquiera había sido el primero. Veintiséis en ese momento, había sido enviado como asistente de un famoso arquitecto*. (S.M.L.XL. Pág. 62).

En la misma época que Rem Koolhaas escribe esta historia -1973- que incluirá luego en las páginas iniciales de S.M.L.XL. Recibe el encargo de la productora Universal para proyectar la sede central de la citada corporación. En el verano de 1996 Koolhaas, Dan Wood y siete personas más de OMA_AMO pasaron seis semanas en Los Ángeles

per actualitzar

haciendo de “insiders” en aquel lugar ajeno de proyecto y estudio en persona de todo MCA/Universal. Pasaron semanas estudiando y fotografiando los interiores y exteriores reales e imaginados. El proyecto acabó abortado, aunque la validez de este periodo de aprendizaje no quede camuflada por su fatal destino, que fue cancelado, como tantos, después de años de trabajo. Los planes de fusiones y adquisiciones previstos por el presidente de la citada compañía no habían prosperado de la manera imaginada pero aún así OMA relata el proyecto como un largo e intenso proceso que al final ofrece una salida hacia otro lugar, que es AMO. (“S.M.L.XL., el Gran Evento”, Tesis Doctoral de Veronica Melendez. Pág. 154-504). El presidente de la compañía Universal no era otro que Edgar Bronfman, un multimillonario y ejecutivo de capitales de riesgo que se había trasladado a California desde Nueva York, descendía de las grandes familias neoyorquinas de principios de siglo en donde su abuelo se había hecho multimillonario aprovechando después de la ley seca la necesidad de venta de las grandes licoreras americanas que siendo propiedad de sociedades canadienses necesitaban residir en Estados Unidos y radicarse en Nueva York que ya en aquel momento era la capital del comercio mundial. Así fue como Samuel Bronfman, el abuelo, compró a sus dueños la licorera Seagrams y encargó su Sede Central en Nueva York a un ya no tan joven arquitecto alemán que estaba en USA exiliado de los nazis, así es como se juntan los destinos profesionales de Rem Koolhaas y el joven arquitecto protagonista del proyecto fracasado de la casa Kroller-Muller y del relato de su abuela. Un cuarto de siglo después de conocer la identidad del “desafortunado” arquitecto, Koolhaas escribirá el relato de S.M.L.XL. Llamado “The House that made Mies”.

we do consultancies, we also accompany the government- mostly it's the local regional Brussels government - in implementing, let's say, legislation that would help reuse come through. That gives you an idea, so on the one hand you have Rotor -the non-profit organisation-, which exists since 2005. Then, on the other hand you have Rotor DC, existing since 2016, a cooperative company we're all owners or shareholders of that company, and it is really specialised in dismantling components and reselling them. That's it, I hope that answers your question. Yeah, so... and Lionel, you mentioned... does it mean that in every of these different activities there are different people working there or kind of working simultaneously in different departments? Well, we have a mixed team. Let's say we are a team of about thirty-four people right now working on the two structures. These are mostly people with varied backgrounds, so we have many architects but we also have designers, we have scenographers, we have lawyers, we have bioengineers. So it's people with quite different competences and depending on what kind of mission we have we constitute a team that is composed differently. But we try to avoid having, let's say, fixed departments with people that will only do consultancy for

instance, and other people that would only do design. So it's important for us that everybody comes a little bit in contact with those different tasks and challenges. On the other hand, of course, we need to optimise the functioning, and so indeed it's tailored to everybody's competences.

And then, for instance, *would you work in a specific project with the materials you are dismantling?* An exhibition you are organizing... so all these different experiences are fluxing together, and there is a discussion and what you learn on one side, goes to the other?

Yeah, it's a good question, it's a good question... because it preoccupies us a lot, as well. In a sense that we know we are accumulating a lot of knowledge, and it's not always easy to share. So, we come from a team of three people in the beginning, and then six people... And there was a phase until 2010 where every design decision in a design project was taken collectively. So, you had six people thinking about the design for an exhibition or a book. And every word was checked and guaranteed by everybody in the team. Obviously, when you work with thirty-four people that's no longer possible. It requires some reflection and intelligence about how you still get to share that accumulated wisdom without making it impossible to work and without people having to spend lots and lots of time to go over decisions made by others. So it's a balance to keep between optimising functioning and being efficient. And sharing information. But overall I would say that's probably something that distinguishes us, we try to be as horizontal as

possible. It's not a pyramidal structure, even if we're lots of people, we try not to have bosses who say to other people what they will do. So, yeah... I could talk about this for a long while but it's not necessarily the topic. We also try to design organizations in a way that is interesting.

So actually... ok, ok, ok... yeah, yeah, you're right, you're right.

Yeah, it's my turn to ask you a question, right?

Ok, yeah.

So, um... *Curro: Many of your designs integrate found objects, often labelled waste. Now how do you make the distinction between the discarded material that could be the starting point for something and the rest? To put it differently, is there a discarded material that you never want to work with?*

Ah!... yeah, I like that. I would say that theoretically...it's material! If we take out the kind of historical considerations, if this is, oh, this is a natural kind of material, this is pure good, this is a leftover shitty plastic... I wouldn't... I try to take a different shape, to separate from what has been perceived in history; if this is a novel material, this is a high-quality material, or if this is an expensive or it is an economically down material. I try... to me the challenge is actually to take, to separate that thing, to deal with the material whatever it is coming from: its nature, as respectful, and as honest, and as dignified, as a recognition, in any material there is a value and a meaning, and separating what has been historically considered...this is one of the first steps to me. Actually, the real chal-

lenge is to use particularly the most shitty one, the less valuable, the most left-over and forgotten, to explore what you're able to do with that. As far as understanding the material qualities, the physical qualities, the limitations... I really like to take something that for most of society is considered shit or like nothing that could happen there as a working... If I have to choose one material I would always choose what society considers shitty.

Ok, the outcast... Is the recognizability important for you? I mean, that people need to recognize where it comes from and how it has shifted into something else?

You mean like... I like for the material to explain a little bit of its story or explain that it had a past before it was in another use. Somehow, I like the feeling that people see someone throw away, someone considered it had no value and you kind of give it a second chance. Of course, my situation is very different than yours in that point, in the sense that you have to consider, I understand, marketing demands, if you take nice tiles from a floor... I mean, you know that there will be people interested in that. But I guess that if you find in the building, let's say, behind the tiles, cement there, what is the value perceived to put in the market that kind of cement flat shitty thing? I mean, in my case I can play because it's a very particular small scale, I can play with some thing that probably in your case, when you do this selection of materials, I understand that you are considering it's market possibilities. Or actually, I ask you: *do you sometimes choose to recover certain materials that even on the market-*

ing perspective you're not sure of its potential but you recognize that it makes sense to see if someone is interested in that material?

Yeah, it's a good question. That is something that we did in the beginning, so when we started with Rotor DC, it was very difficult to understand what people were interested in and what not. But what is really important to know is... I'm gonna take an example here: for instance, this is a tile that we recovered from buildings that are from the 1930s-40s or 50s, it's a Belgian product, it's a tile in terracotta that required a lot of energy to make, so it has been baked at very high temperatures, but it's the kind of product that we could not immediately imagine we would salvage on a big scale when we started our operations with Rotor DC. Now, four to five years later, we have become the tile specialists in Brussels. And you'll see here we have a lot of these salvaged tile varieties in our showroom, we have many more in our website, we have even developed a special tile cleaning procedure, so it's partially mechanized, it's a whole protocol to remove the cement traces that you have on those tiles when you get them out of the buildings we dismantle. Now, how did we end up deciding that it was good to remove these tiles and not something else? We realized after a while that it was possible to sell them at a price that compensated for all the costs, that we were encouraged to remove them, to transport them, to clean them, to clean them again, to package them and to sell them. Well, even after all these operations we can still make a little

profit that allows for the operation to happen, but it's important to have that much, otherwise, as a business you will not survive. But sometimes, indeed it's difficult to anticipate on which product you will be capable of making such profit, or at least to break even, and on which you will not. So, I think that in every operation that we do it's important to have a steady stream of certain materials that you know you can rely upon, and in our cases it's about some elements of interior furniture that are often dismantled in Brussels like office furniture and partition walls. I can show you an example... This is your typical glass partition wall as you would have it in the late XIX or early XX century office building, and that is being trashed very, very regularly on an important scale. We know that these elements are easily available, but still you will have to dismantle them and afterwards you need to be sure that there is a market for it that you can resell it to. Now we know more or less what the parameters of that market are, so we know that we can safely dismantle it providing that it's less than... between 2,20m and 2,40m high, it cannot be higher and it cannot be lower, and we need also to check a series of other parameters, and if it corresponds to that then we know there is a market for it and we go for it, we can safely dismantle it and resell it. Everything that is outside of those certainties is always a risk, and sometimes you need to make calculated risks but you cannot make too many of them. That's the whole art of running a company like this. I would say that what we are doing at Rotor DC is some-

thing completely different than what we are doing at non-profit Rotor, and I would say that my colleagues running the whole dismantling operations at Rotor DC have accumulated a lot of expertise in knowing what differences, and what you have to watch out for. Because the one thing you don't want to do is to dismantle a huge amount of materials that afterwards you cannot sell.

And, let me ask you, for instance: How are these... in terms of aesthetic perception, in terms of what second-hand looks like, in terms of surface quality... Is it for you, the market thing...I was checking some thing that I have here... I am not sure if it's clear enough, this is a little detail, but very softly, for instance, in this wood...

Yeah

If you have something like that in your materials, that you cannot remove... is it... where is the limit? Do you know already that your clients appreciate that there is a second life here and that the material has marks? Or do you have a narrow space here?

Yeah, look, for instance, here: on the one hand we are showing oak planks that are being used for floors, in this case the oak has been completely sanded, so you don't see the traces of use anymore, and some people like this. Other people might prefer to have it like here, I don't know if you see all those details...they might prefer an oak floor that will still feature the traces of use. And sometimes, let's say, the wood that has been used and that has been altered and is a little bit worn out, can be of far more economic value than the one that looks just like a new one. So, this is sal-

vaged oak but it looks more or less the same than new oak, and there is an increasingly profitable market of reselling second-hand wood. We know of a few operators, also in Belgium there is one company called Corvelyn where the only thing they do is reselling precious second-hand wood, and for them those traces of use are really important. Another example I can give you is here, we have these...these are just samples, but we have these porcelain tiles - also probably from the 40s or 50 -, this one has these beautifully rounded corners that you don't see in contemporary porcelain tiles, it's really thick as well. But obviously when you look close by you will see these scratches and those little dots, and it's not perfect, you see it here as well. So, when you place those porcelain tiles you will have to take into consideration that you will have these imperfections and um... I would say it's something that you need to prepare the buyer for. And again, sometimes it will be considered to be like faulty, or something that disadvantages the material and sometimes it can enhance the value, it depends a little bit. And it's pretty subtle for which materials it works and for which ones it doesn't work, and obviously it's a question of the presence of patina in general. The observation we make is that it works



photographs, football trading cards, a female nude...taped inside]

Great!

That were in them we keep them because it's part of the quality of the material.

Yeah,

So it's almost an anthropological document and it is important to keep that. But... yeah, it's difficult to say that we have the same policy, but in general, traces of use is not something that we will try to remove, and the people who come and buy elements at our store are psychologically prepared to accept that there will be these traces and that it's part of the history of the element and that it's more often an asset than a default. We also try...when we sell the elements, we put them on our website, we try them and describe them as best as we can and we give these stories - if we have them available we explain exactly which conditions the elements were used in their first use -. So we think that is part of the trajectory of that material or component.

Nice, nice...

Yeah, I have put my sheet somewhere else, but I had a question that really... I don't need my sheet paper to remember it, it's: *Curro, who do you consider to be your great influences in your trajectory as a designer? Which is pretty exceptional, I mean, the kind of position you have within the design profession, you're not an average designer, you stand apart. Who would you say in your professional trajectory has left an important imprint in you?* Intellectually but also in terms of design approach.

Oh, Yeah, there is a mixture...

Of course.

I would say it's hard to talk about a few, really... a few references. You have big names of course... it was just a few days ago that he passed away, Enzo Mari, you know? I didn't have the chance to meet him personally. But besides that, I have to say that for me it's a fascinated and never-ending interest in the vernacular, in the everyday manifestation of people, often in a situation of difficulties, of having very little, of having no other chance, that they have to answer the challenge with whatever they have and with limited tools, and maybe limited interest or abilities of hand-crafting. And they have to solve a situation. Those circumstances to me, that show human capacity to go on even not on the best, for sure, not on the best conditions, not on their first option, but they don't have another chance. So that way of achieving things, imperfection, because there is no knowledge, no tools, but it's something moving, the challenge moves people to survive and... Yeah, maybe it sounds like looking at something in the zoo and it may sound not honest, but somehow with respect. I think the human condition in those situations can almost be an emergency. I think it manifests a ghost part that many of the...prejudices and sometimes silly things that designers and architects have, you know? Certain elements that only... you're not sure where that interest comes from, or how honest or how paranoid we can be. And those very direct manifestations show another condition, less affected by aesthetics and less affected by the intellectual, kind of... ro-

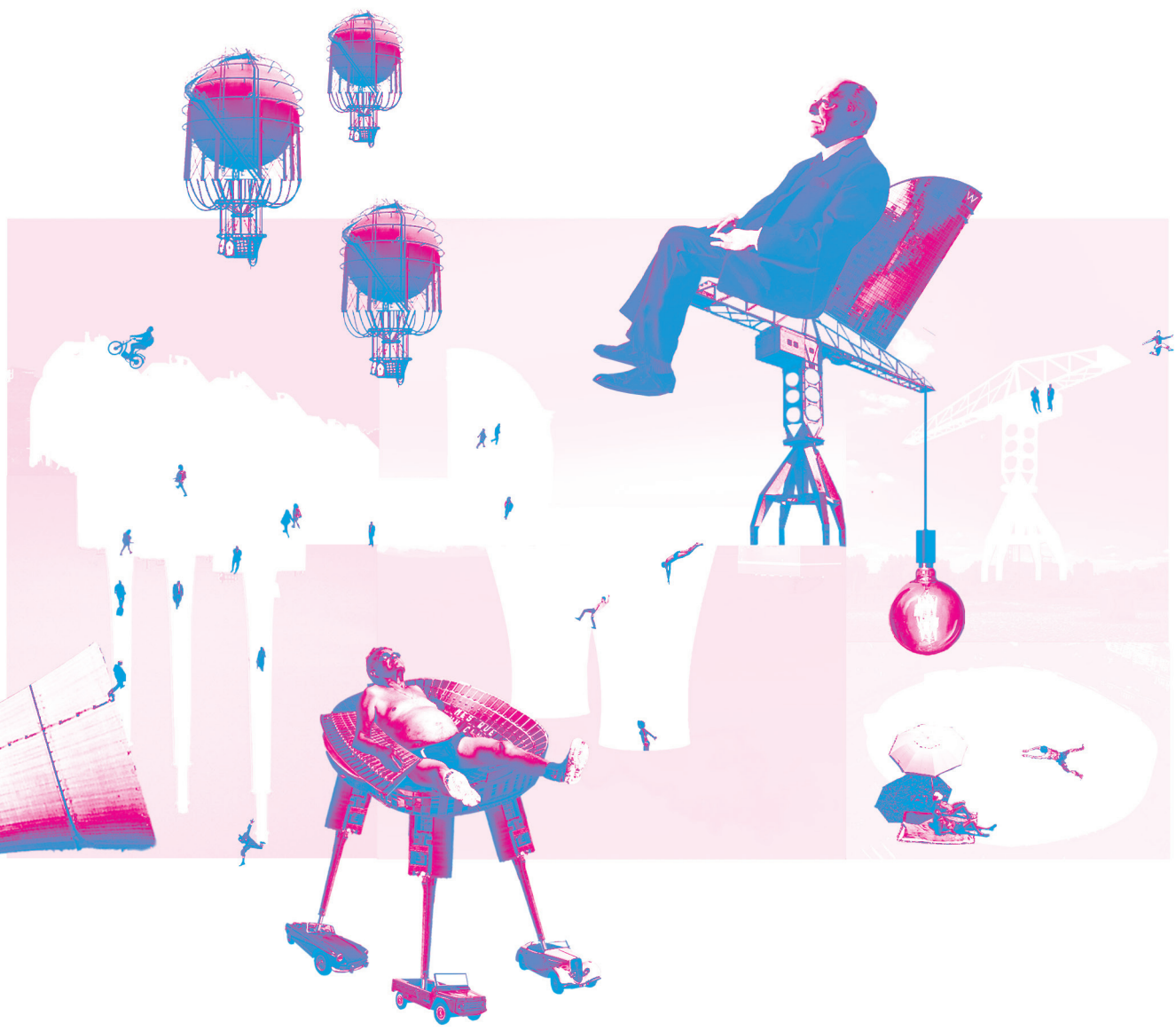
cambolesc... arguments, and I guess, you know, this is a bit different, but also in common. You know, the french they have this term: amateur, you know amateur? And it's someone who loves what he's doing and does it because he loves to do that even if he does not have the professional training to do that. And there's something of that, I think... I'm very... I believe a lot in amateurism.

Ok, if you allow me I'll just add a tale to that question, which is actually almost like a supplementary question. Obviously, I understand the dimension of like... going back to design situations where people have to take the events in their own hands, or the means of production in their own hands. My question is: *what is the role... or how do you see the role of industry in that? Because imagine a situation where everybody would again become the producers of their own design, where can industry or the serialized production of identical objects still be useful in a context where people try to seize the means of production again?*

Ok, well... I guess, in a very basic way that, to me, industry might be justified when it tries to achieve a kind of optimizing process of transformation, you know? Like the wood industry, or glass industry, or you show to us tiles, ceramic industry, when a big facility is able to transform something to give its maximum quality, in which it is hard to believe that you'd find other ways to achieve that, without an industrialized process. You know? You show us these wonderful tiles, pink tiles, apparently it seems like, well, maybe in the previous

really well for natural stone, so if you have worn out natural stone, like these ones here it always looks beautiful. This is a... I don't remember, it's... Or here you have a travertine floor that is second-hand, that always works really well. But when you go for other types of materials, and especially very contemporary materials, plastics, etc..., their traces of wear and worn-out elements are considered problematic. So it's a sliding scale... what is important for us is that we make the reuse of components as easily available as possible, so that people can try and integrate reused components even for a new project and it doesn't necessarily need to look new. But let's say, to look second hand, it must be possible also to integrate second-hand in a project that looks as if it was new, so that is no longer an issue. But sometimes the second-hand dimension and the used dimension has an almost anthropological asset, a supplementary quality, and if that is present we will do everything to avoid removing it, and to keep it, to preserve it.

We are selling these old second-hand steel cupboards here which are coming from a steel factory in Bologna and we will never try to clean them and to get them perfect before selling them, so all the original details... [opens a locker to reveal a group of



process somewhere they are burnt with trees under earth and can achieve a certain quality but I guess that's not easy. So in those circumstances, to me it makes sense to believe that the mass production involvement and industry is able to push something to a level that otherwise is very hard. But yeah, I guess your question also goes in the direction that it seems like in a few years we will be able to transform things, materials, to produce them in a small scale in the neighbourhood area... Well everybody I guess is looking for, I mean, we wish that this avoids the negative consequences that this big industry and big transformation carries, so it will be nice to believe that every time we find ways that are much more in balance than the big industry which we know generates a big impact. I wish, to the student generation now, that they can go and find these much more opportunities. Maybe, Lionel, because I think this goes very fast, there's not so much time.

Yeah, yeah

Maybe I have a question for you... yeah... maybe you already talked about it a little bit. But I'm wondering, at Rotor, you do exhibitions, you do publications, you work on discussion on legislations to achieve better things, and I wonder some of these kind of more pedagogic ways to try to clarify the impact behind all these businesses and what is behind the reusing attitude, which in an exhibition you can teach people, or you can show about what is going on in an environmental impact and whatever. But these attitudes, the pedagogic things, when you have other departments,

you know, like selling reused materials, *is it possible that you're not just selling a material, but that you're doing a bit of a pedagogical thing? That you are communicating an attitude of reusing and how does it involve many more things than pure aesthetic nice objects?*

Yeah, yeah, obviously when we... When we set up the project Rotor DC, the idea was to show that it's possible to run a profitable company doing what we do. So it's not only a question of aesthetics, that is only playing a little role, it's more a question of showing that setting out a company in a city or context like Brussels, a company that is pushing the agenda of the circular economy, is possible, and it's also possible to keep it as a profitable or break even company. And once you've shown that, it is far easier to go and convince politicians or other businesses or contractors or demolition companies that it's the right way to go. Because unless you have the economic... let's say... plausibility, or that economic credit, it is very difficult to bring out your story in this kind of world.

Yeah, and you are 35 or 40 people there, right?

Yeah, for the moment 34. But it's... I think we've reached a level where maybe we don't want to grow anymore in terms of number of people, but we wanna give the best opportunities to everyone on board, and um... we would love to see similar initiatives pop-up elsewhere. So that's a different agenda, because we can't do it all. But Curro, maybe it's time to open up the floor.

Yeah, absolutely, ok, so Lionel I think there

is here... I can read, it's from someone signed as @nu... she says: *the existence of Rotor DC and other companies that up-cycle depends on two different aspects of architecture production nowadays. a positive one, we have assumed we must reuse buildings, adapt them, and a less positive one, which is that we -architects and developers- throw a lot of materials inside, which positions do you face behind it?*

Yeah, I would say that it's true, I think there is a consensus within, at least, progressive architects that we have to try, and even with contractors and real estate companies, that whenever it is possible you try to maintain a building and improve it. So, you will make it up to date in terms of emissions and energy consumption and other forms of impact. So you recuperate the main parts but obviously in doing so you have to remove part of the materials, such as the interior materials, the interior finishes, etc. and...that is really one of the points in where we say, even during such an operation you can do it well and you can botch it, or you can do it badly. So we will try, and that is part of the consultancy project that we do, to accompany big real estate operators in trying that the stream of materials that will leave a building that is being transformed, that even from that stream we take out as much as can be reused as possible. And we then prepare it for reuse not necessarily in that building, it can happen, but it can also be reused offsite. But for this to happen, you have one dismantling phase and then one renovation phase, there, as well, you can try and make the effort that as many materi-

als that re-enter the building as possible, will be second-hand building materials. So it's not because it's interior finishes need to be new, and it's not because it's wasted interior finishes that it needs to end up in the waste container. So, as you will see in many of the materials that we are reselling here, there's a lot of interior finishing materials... It's a lot of wood, it's a lot of tiles, ceilings, it's lighting equipment. So one of the projects we are working on in brussels is a big late 1950s office tower, it's tens of thousands of square meters of office space; and there we do that, there's 89% of the building that remains in place in weight: so the concrete structure, the foundations and part of the facade. All the rest is being renovated but then we try on that remaining 11% of materials that will go away, to re-enter the building; we try even there to have as much reuse as possible. I hope that answers the question.

So Lionel I read here, from @marionabene. She's also pointing at the theme of pedagogy, she says: *I would like to ask if rotor makes an effort to communicate that all these materials are available... not only to make sure that some profit can be done but also as a way of spreading social pedagogy.* Um, yeah, yeah, yeah... Well it's a good question. That's one of the reasons why we do more than just running a company that is dismantling building components. So, social pedagogy, yeah, it's obviously important. That's also the reason why we are writing books on the topic, and setting up exhibitions on building materials we use, and there is obviously a lot that still

needs to be done. I think that things are heading in the right direction for the moment, when you see that... when you look at the fashion industry, for instance, you have a recent evolution where even companies like zalando are now reselling second-hand clothes. So, everybody realises that there is a problem with fast fashion, so throw-away fashion. There's something similar happening in real estate, we have throw-away real estate or fast real estate that exists, and it's an increasing problem, it makes the quantities of buildings and demolition waste in countries like Belgium to have doubled, in ten years. I think people need to start understanding that problem, and there's definitely still an awful lot of work to do in terms of communication and disseminating the idea.

But I saw there is a question for you Curro, maybe... I will ask it so you can focus on the reply: *Your products are society involved; how do you make the resulting products available to them?*

Yeah, I wish I had a clear comment on that. It's a challenge, you know? Because you are working in a very small scale, very time processing, and that causes that when you want to connect to the market reality it's hard not to put that thing in a position that, if you have to count, you know, someone that is involved in a stool for three hours, and you want a recognition of that person, of three hours of that person there, and actually he/she's probably been spending more time because they have been searching for the materials and then making decisions, manipulating... So how you put

that back to the market... It's hard to avoid not to put that on a segment that isn't affordable... It's not that easy... You know, in a gallery context or in a certain shop. I see what we do as little experiments, they're just attempts which we know they cannot be a model of something scalable exactly the same way, because it may be perceived... of course I understand, you know, a stool from Ikea, you can get it for 6 euros or 9 euros, and why does this cost 100? The question is still, how to make things arrive to society, it's still unclear for me, but for sure, I don't see what we do as only market oriented or to make a sellable element, I would like to believe we have to explore other ways to arrive to society, not necessarily as a market product on sale.

Ok

And actually Lionel, I see there is another one here that maybe you may like to have a comment. This is from @flexoarquitectura: *Hi Lionel, it seems that your strategies operate at a city scale level. To which extent is the administration involved?*

Ok, well, it's a good question... I think we operate at the level of at least a city like Brussels -which is only one million inhabitants city- so it's a tiny scale if you compare it to other European cities. But we have, let's say... the advantage of Brussels is that it's pretty autonomous in questions relating to waste management. And so we have a government that is actively working for it, we have a minister of the environment who is competent for many of the questions that are important for us. So the whole administration with which we have multiple ties, and with which we

have been collaborating ever since 2008 -when we did the first study for them- and since we have been co-developing a kind of approach, a long term planning on how to stimulate reuse of building components in the city of Brussels, and I think it contributed to the fact that in terms of circular economy the city of Brussels has done a lot of interesting things. But obviously we are not the only partners, it's really a network effort. And they happen to integrate many of the suggestions we're making, and we often rely on them to have supplementary funds for doing very specific studies, for instance. One project that I can mention is a project called opalis.eu which is like a list of all the second hand resellers of building materials in Belgium, and now it has extended to France, Holland and the UK, well, the UK is a collaboration. But that was originally funded with money from the Brussels government. So, yeah, we think there is... if we want to make reusing possible on a bigger scale, we need to make an ecosystem on a bigger scale, and it's a national scale, and it might even be a transnational scale.

Ok, Lionel, I think we have just two minutes. What about this question from... yeah...?

Yeah, I guess it's gonna be time to wrap up then, and say goodbye...

Yeah... you, so... yeah... probably, we...

Maybe just a last quick question

Ok: *What are your thoughts on conserving traditional techniques and materials, woods, ecological architecture?*

Curro? Are you still there?

Oh, yeahyeahyeahyeah... Last question, we

have one minute Lionel, *what do you feel about conserving traditional techniques and materials, woods, ecological architecture?* Um, I think conserving traditional techniques is fundamental because many... There was another question that was like: which materials are easier to transform? I would say that materials like wood are very easy to transform, which enhances the choices to be reintegrated into a new project, and to do that we need carpenters and people that perfectly master the topic; although for marble, for instance, this is more difficult to transform, and reuse is only gonna be possible if you have these artisans who master the elements good enough to make something that also looks good, and raises to the level of good architecture, and, so yeah... unless you have them it's never gonna happen.

Ok, ok, great, so Lionel, I think now, this is the bye-bye moment. *Are there a few words that you'd like to share, a nice message for the students, for their future or whatever?*

Well, I think that it's great that they're interested in practices like this. I wish them well; I would say the only way to truly learn the level of reuse is to practice some yourself, so try and... I guess you agree with that right Curro? That there is nothing as useful as getting involved in a workshop that reuses building components or elements, you will definitely learn a lot, about the intelligence of these materials and these components but also about how you can deal with their aesthetics and their qualities.

Get your hands dirty, dirty hands.

Yeah, exactly, get your hands dirty and go

from the workshop to the drawing table and back!

Excellent, super! Great! Lionel, super great to meet you!

Likewise!

Thanks for all the stuff, take care!

Likewise, thanks for the invitation Curro, ok, bye-bye.

Thanks to you, thanks to everybody, guys, so this is 10 seconds of bye-bye, take care!

Take dirty hands, and see you all do some shit there, Ciao!

Hope to see you live after corona, bye!

We are finishing this thing... I, I should do something here... ok guys, so I have to touch this thing...

Curro Claret is a freelance designer since 1998. He has also been a professor at Elisava and IED, among others.

Lionel Devlieger is an architect and engineer. He holds a PhD in architectural history and theory by the Ghent University, and co-founded ROTOR in 2006.

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