

A cultural landscape that has developed significantly over the past twenty years



- A proactive cultural ethos based on the relationship between the public and the works of art

*"Making sure that major works for collective heritage and posterity and modern masterpieces should be accessible to as many people as possible."*

André Malraux

- The difficult task of promoting alternative art forms into consideration over and above conventional, institutional cultural norms

*"Culture: of transition, uprooting, tearing up and the transformation of self through which one becomes other. Cultural: a substitute for culture, by which we use to achieve not change, but a reinforcement of what already exists."*

Robert Redeker

- A combination of initiatives which dare to go beyond national and regional boundaries
- Major world-wide trends
- A meeting in Marseilles of over 1500 artists and 80 contributors from thirty countries

- Work on the policy of “institutional discovery” spearheaded by Michel Duffour, Heritage and Cultural Decentralisation Secretary, between 2000 – 2002, and supported by numerous interministerial partners, notably the “Ville et l’Economie Solidaire (City & Finance Solidarity) directive.

*“Let’s rip out the billboards that litter the landscape” Peter Handke*



- The aim to adapt policy in order to facilitate input in the cultural sector (Artfactories.com, Autres Parts...) not only from within, but also at the heart of the political institution through the New Artistic Territories



[www.institut-des-villes.org](http://www.institut-des-villes.org)



[www.lafriche.org/nta/](http://www.lafriche.org/nta/)



[www.artfactories.net](http://www.artfactories.net)

## Different titles and a huge range of community-based projects

- The vacuousness of any attempt at defining the vastly different experiences through the origins of the artists



Armand Gatti, auteur



Collectif 12 (géré par un collectif)



Les substances (friche municipale)

- Ways of organising events



Théâtre des Asphodèles (association)



Le peldis (lieu autogéré)



Christian Poitevin, élu, performeur

- A mixture of different artistic disciplines



Atelier d'artiste

- The relationship established and maintained through the works



Ancienne usine réaménagée



Public dans une ancienne manufacture de tabacs

- The Relationship between communities



Atelier de scratch



Atelier d'écriture amateur

- The relationship between public bodies and the art market



Pratique sportive dans une usine en Chine



Sesc Pompéia (Sao Polo)

The scale of each project

## Progression

- An attempt to relate each experience to relative milestones whilst refusing to over interpret standardised criteria
- To understand the conditions under which each project takes shape

A factory closure

A politician's enthusiasm

An artist's needs

The mobilisation of a sector in civil society

- To consider that the facilities and the practices in place do not always allow the artist to take new directions in their work

*"In institutions, your voice, your way of thinking is immediately shattered by a prism which completely prevents people from coming together. Everything is controlled, from conception to public display of projects. Our shows are controlled. Everything which would allow a meeting to take place is defined and categorised to the enth degree. I believe that it is important to offer artists the opportunity to be present in the space to answer questions about the contents of a show, and that it is essential that the space to provide the conditions necessary for generating debate in order to animate the atmosphere of the space, in the context of its immediate surroundings, landscape and, by dint of this, have an impact on politics"* Loic Touzé, Chorégraphe

- To refuse cultural apparatus which were constructed over thirty years to serve as centres for cultural consumption

- To identify problems central to artistic permanency
- To reinforce the need for new areas of experimentation which are not limited purely to artistic innovation, but also place it at the very heart of social, economic, urban and political experiments.
- To put projects into a context, not simply to compliment the professional, institutionalised artistic system, or mere regeneration of the institutional domain
- To redefine the boundaries of public interest and their idea of the artistic field

*"These practices are not to be taken simply as an addition to the professional, institutionalised artistic system, another place where innovation would aim to regenerate the institutional domain. These practices are nevertheless defined as processes and projects which support their own individual artistic and professional properties. What is at stake is the redefinition of boundaries of public scrutiny and their notion of the artistic field as a paradigm which could be adapted to describe contemporary plurality and interactions." Philippe Henry (New artistic practices and cultural development: a simple side-step or a real change – Théâtre Public –Janvier/Février 2001).*

## A historical coincidence

- The industrial crisis freed up large-scale, uncluttered production spaces, heralding a drive for the appropriation of space, which for years had slowed down market forces in the heart of large cities



Caserne Letourneux TSF - Montréal

*"Wake-up! The bullets of the advertising mafia are killing our town. In Kreutberg, the BeWoGe will again destroy a fantastic factory. They are putting up the same blocks of concrete everywhere in accordance with the market forces"* Anonymous tract 1979

- The end of an era when our cultural thought systems rested on the principle of artistic autonomy
- A new era of cultural action which directly questions the definition and the place of art in our society



- Three historical references representing major milestones

  - The decentralisation of the theatre

  - The artistic spaces created in the 1970's

  - The alternative art spaces of the 1980's

- The steadfast sense of place of these projects is one of the singular characteristics of the new areas of art

  - "Living in Uzeste is not like going back to your hometown to work, but like going to work on your hometown."* Bernard Lubat, composer

- Those in the cultural wasteland are not anti-establishment, but movers and shakers in a society which they hope to push in a more dynamic direction, a society whose members take part in its transformation.

  - "The institutional: the institutions, existing laws and those that we have inherited. The institutionalised: political activity which reworks these institutions, laws and principles."* Cornélius Castoriadis, philosopher

## The foundations of art which bring together these experiences

- Artist and at times the public can no longer find working conditions and adequate exchanges in order to bridge the time gap
- It is not merely a question of money which is critical, but working conditions which are conceived in terms of an artistic framework expressed through political thought.

OVERFLOW  
UNFETTER  
UNLOCK  
DEBATE  
SURPASS  
UNBLOCK  
CLEAR THE WAY  
DEREGULATE  
DECENTRALISE  
DEMARCATÉ  
DISTURB

- These essential elements of production are based around three major axes:

**Time**, which is revisited again and again in accordance with each timescale; artistic temporality, economic temporality and the temporality of social change

*"It is not the state that calculates the length of our residencies, or the format and running time of our shows."*  
Christian Rizzo, choreographer.

*"Artistic time is out of time"* Ferdinand richard, AMI

Investing in **spaces** that are free, flexible, and viable for staging events, open and clearly defined in their own right and seeing them as both workplaces and a forum for political and social exchange.

**Ways of interacting with the public** and considering them as artistic partners involved in the adventure.

*"What we have managed to notice observe, is that worlds that never collided are coming together, worlds that had nothing to do with each other are finding common ground. This offers us a situation which is objective which through its expansion may even be able to provide the basis of new artistic questions"* Michel Simonot – Report for the Minister of Culture – Contemporary essays – 2000.

## Is their originality in production and programming?

- A new conception of the idea of artistic production which focuses on all processes by which writing on the socialisation of work arises
- A clear social dimension
- The artistic processes which govern ways of working

*"Works of art create their own means of production" Pierre Boulez*

- Products and processes are important

*"The essence and worth of art does not depend purely on the objects themselves, but on the dynamic between the development of the active experience through which they are both conceived and perceived." Shusterman*

- The work itself is not the only thing of value in the creative process; there are also important intermediary stages during its production

- By approaching the problem of distribution differently, putting on longer shows, measuring by different standards is a determining factor in the approach of their programming
- Artistic residencies allow artists to discover a new form of social, economic and cultural visibility and also offer an opportunity to reclaim artistic territory directly.
- Opening up spaces for practising artists and amateurs to participate in or interact with work in progress.
- The movement as a means to an end has no universal aesthetic value and is not simply an aesthetic movement.
- We question the notions of rigour and artistic excellence

*"The confrontation between the tenants of an essentialist approach to the phenomenon of art (where the objective value lies in the actual price of the work) and those that have a relativist, events-based approach to artistic endeavour (where the inherent value is quantified at the moment the work is presented and the consequent judgement, experience and feelings of individuals or groups of individuals)"Philippe Henry*

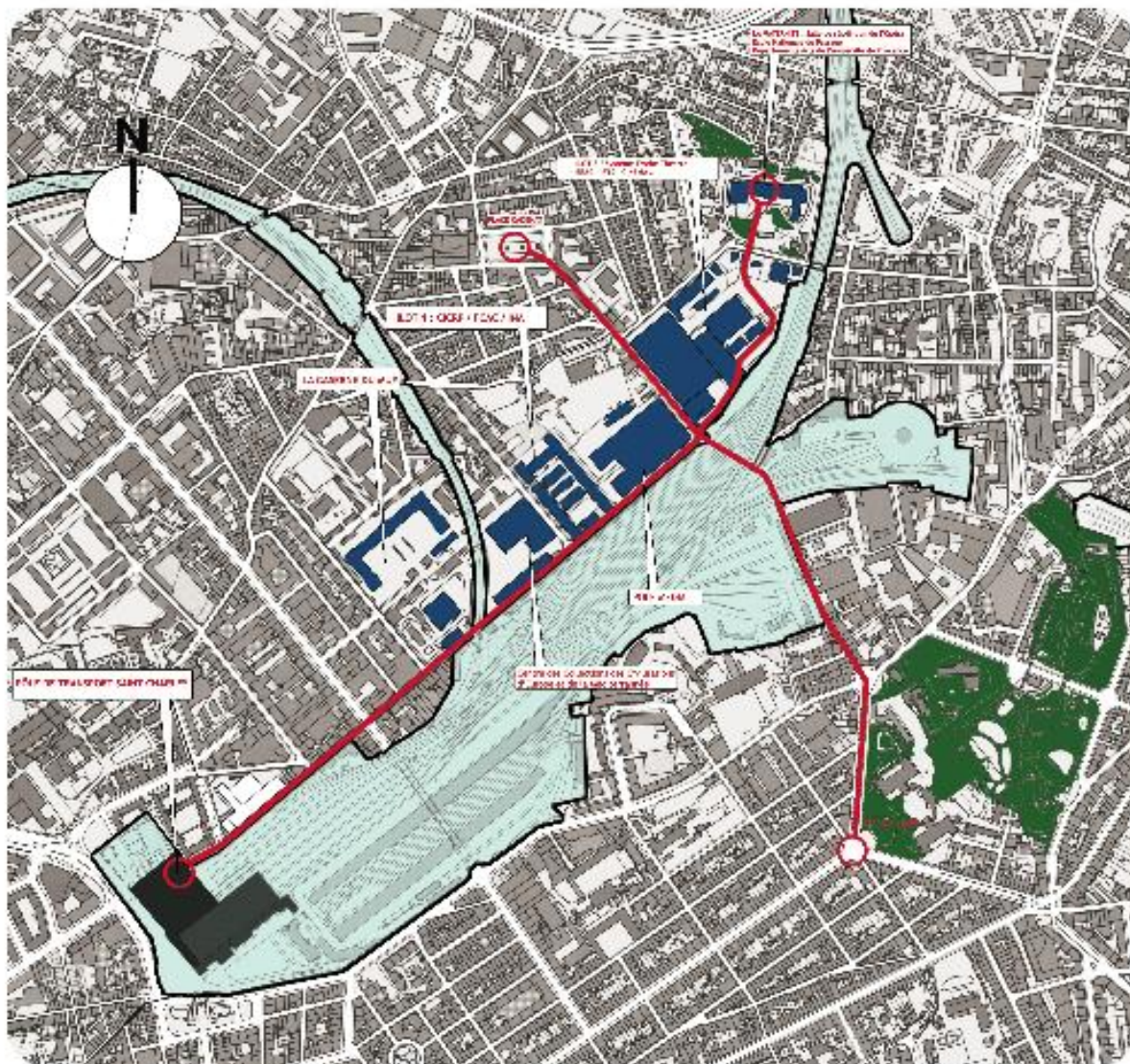
- We can no longer be satisfied by a single value scale because there are many different approaches to art – multi-disciplinary and transversal.

*"When the institutional space is a place of synthesis the fringes should be a place of inspiration and for the deconstruction of cultural practices." Karine Noulette, d'Emmetrop*

## Writing the space

- The nature of spaces which are animated by these experiments is not to be underestimated in terms of the gathering momentum of the movement.
- These spaces fire the imagination, fuel fantasy and desire. They are places of projection, liberty and constraint.
- They are writing spaces which generate their own language. They are responsible for the worker and the creator of the work.
- The ethos of the space dictates a forward-thinking approach
- Spaces capable of maintaining a sense of immense plasticity following architectural transformation.
- “These blank spaces”, according to George Aperhis, “ may be granted extra room for error”.
- Architectural theoreticians, like Hubert Tonka, defined this concept under the term “architectural modification”
- These places need to be used effectively over the long term in order to remain representative of the complete process of rehabilitation.

A few examples:



Plan masse des trois îlots de la Friche la Belle de Mai à Marseille / Architecte : Matthieu Poitevin



La Tour, bâtiment historique du site de la Friche la Belle de Mai à Marseille





© Photo Francis BLAISE

Le "Campement" de la Friche la Belle de Mai à Marseille / Architecte : Matthieu Poitevin / "Habilage" des aigécos : œuvre de Pierre Gatorl



Rue intérieure de la Friche la Belle de Mai, Marseille / Architecte : M. Poitevin



Le restaurant de la Friche la Belle de Mai à Marseille / Architecte : M. Poitevin

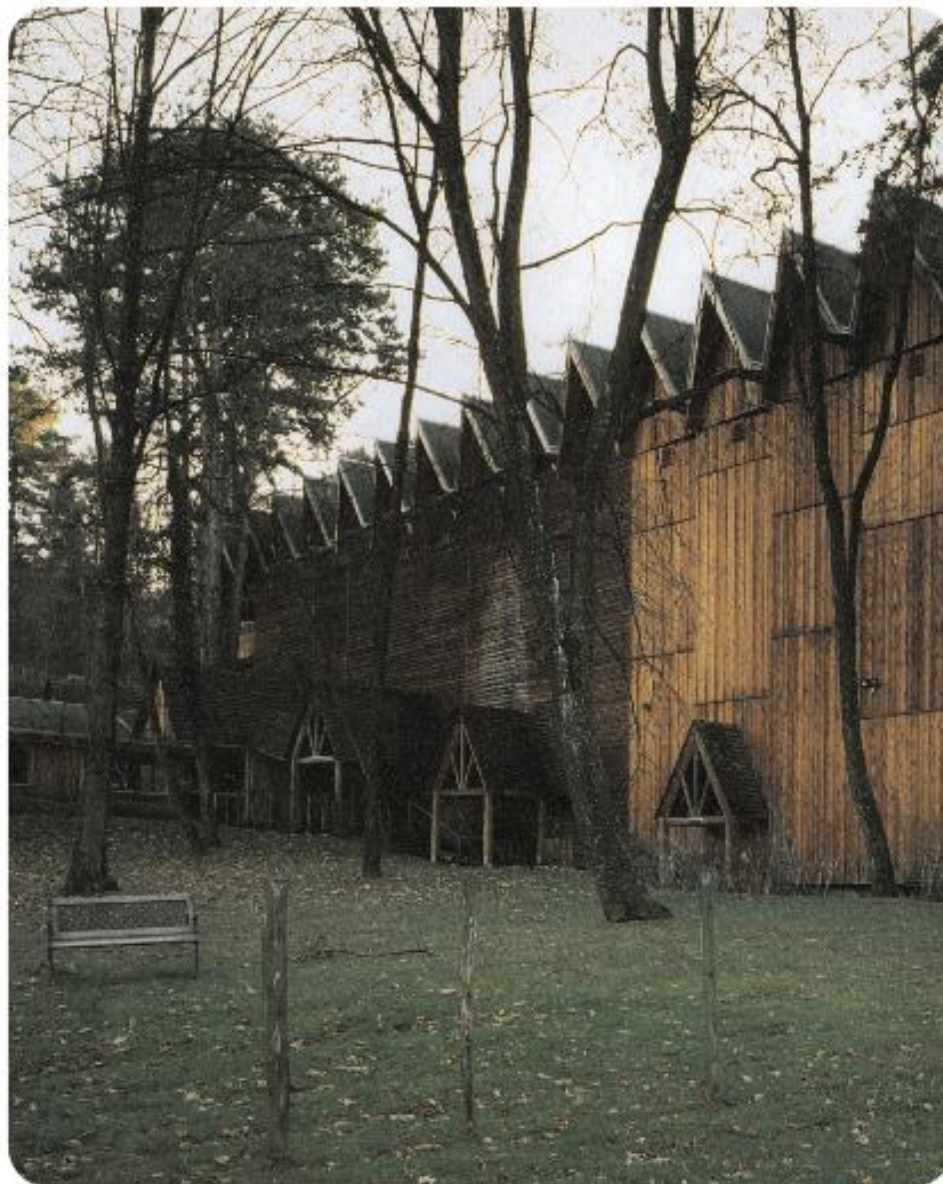


© Renaud Vercey

Mise en lumière de la Tour, par le groupe Dunes



Installation "Vous êtes ici" du groupe Dunes sur le toit de la Tour



La Grange au lac à Évian / Architecte : Patrick Bouchain



Le Cestar à Arras / Architecte : Jean Nouvel

## Another public group

- An ongoing cultural democracy
- The failure of cultural democratisation
- To maintain a relationship between the public and the artist that is as open as possible, as well as that of the public itself and different communities
- To distinguish three categories of the public which is divided, realigned and superimposed, sometimes converging:
  - Spectators
  - Practising members of the public
  - Internal audiences
- The question of amateurs

*In my field, we know that there is not a strong professional dynamic if there is no amateur movement alongside it. Amateurs are the most actively involved members of the public and also practising artists themselves. The three-pronged dynamic amateur/ pro/ audience are the driving force behind the artist's journey. To establish this triangle I only have access to the space and materials available at La Friche. One cannot stop at the relationship between amateur and professional artist and reflect upon how they communicate with each other and, by the same token, in a watertight manner, treat the public like a basic consumer. In our field, these things are inextricably linked. Amateur musicians may one day become professional and then become amateurs once more. They will always have an audience." Ferdinand Richard Head of l'Aide aux Musiques Innovatrices*



## Useful projects?

- Simultaneity and diversity – two practices that converge and confront each other in the same space
- The use of available funds to achieve a balance between the equipment, the staff and the art projects
- The creation of other methods of organisation, in terms of management, programming, set-up and the financing of projects and their staff
- A combination of a myriad of diverse competencies which again challenge the question of the collective
- An exploration of economic models which are based on the principle of what economists call the tertiary sector

*"We must be able to follow a diverse range of projects through. This creates incredible flexibility. The staff then finds themselves in a state of permanent instability and this prevents us from supporting different artists. In the beginning, people often told me that I was unstable, but that is just our way of adapting to change."* Fazette Bordage, Head of Mains d'Oeuvre

## Multiplicity and the simultaneity of function

- To revise the links between the different stages of the creative process, in art, writing to public unveiling
- To bring together the conditions for experimentation in cultural activity which run at right angles to the needs of
  - Research
  - Creation/ production
  - Distribution
  - Training
  - Awareness
 ... and are also parallel with
  - economic,
  - social
  - and educational practice
- To take part in the social sphere in order to participate in the clarification of policy in local projects
- To be major players in the urban development and regeneration of the area
- To pre-empt the urban overhaul and it's scattered centres

## Conclusion

These unique projects run into the hundreds in France, and, into the thousands in the rest of the world. Though cash-strapped and under threat, every day they show deep commitment to the important questions of our time - otherness and singularity, freedom of expression, decentralisation, innovation and democracy.