

ROCK Main Outcomes on City Branding



Extracts from D5.6 ROCK Placebranding Toolkit and
D5.7 Report on Advanced Seminars on Innovative City Branding
by Grupo TASO

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MAXIMIZING THE ROLE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE WHEN BRANDING AND MARKETING THE CITY

For many, Skopje is an unknown city from a still relatively unknown country, though with a long history. The capital of North Macedonia have also an imperious need for building up a more inclusive narrative serving a multi-cultural local population and emphasizing the “who we want to be”. In this context, city branding, in particular a sound approach of it, can be rather instrumental to start building a stronger city identity and narrative, based on Skopje’s own uniqueness and real and potential assets, including cultural heritage.

Indeed, place branding is a practice that should be seen as a **cohesive force**, where heritage can work as a major driver. That is, not only mostly serving the city of the past, as it is told and showcased for visitors and tourists, but also serving the city of today and the city of tomorrow. Therefore targeting a more diversified audience, including business and investment, innovators and the local population too. This challenge was posed by Aušra Sičiūnienė, from Vilnius Municipality, when in the framework of the ROCK project she said that “we do have the heritage city with long lasting traditions and we do have a young & contemporary, smart & innovative Vilnius; today we are looking forward to find a synergy between these two different cities”.

There is a need for maximizing the role of heritage within the city branding & marketing practices, and that is the kind of discussion promoted and carried out by ROCK. According to Diana Apan, Head of Marketing Strategies at the City of Cluj-Napoca, “the discussion marked a turning point in getting more cohesion in the way Cluj tries to communicate itself as a dynamic city, including cultural heritage as city’s main asset”.

Cultural heritage is absolutely a distinctive feature that makes the urban experience in Europe unique. We mean heritage not as a relic of the past but something naturally connected to the contemporary city. This gives Europe an unbeatable positioning in the global tourist market on urban destinations. Nevertheless, beyond the visitor economy, it would also be rather beneficial connecting heritage to other emerging dynamics related to the digital economy, low-carbon prospects, creative economy, social innovation and so on. We mean connecting from a communication point of view. That is, expanding the role of cultural heritage when branding the contemporary city and targeting a wider range of audiences.

And that should be translated into compelling stories.

THE ROCK SEMINARS ON CITY BRANDING

The ROCK vision includes the communication dimension as part of the integrated approach for heritage-led urban development, which is commonly shaped by governance, financing, planning tools and legal frameworks mainly. And the way for that is by connecting heritage to modern city branding and marketing, which is a novelty in projects of this kind. To that purpose, a specific task within the ROCK work plan was organized in order to tackle two main activities: i) the elaboration of a toolkit for branding heritage-led urban development with a focus on storytelling; ii) the organisation of the ROCK series of advanced seminars on innovative city branding in those cities wanting to promote a serious discussion in this field, in particular Vilnius, Cluj-Napoca, Bologna, Lisbon, Athens, Skopje and Torino. As a result, over 200 participants from around one hundred stakeholder entities were engaged, mostly senior officers from destination management and investment promotion agencies, Mayor's cabinets staff, City Council units in charge of culture and heritage management, dirComs from major cultural entities and events in the city, Universities and professionals involved in design and visual arts.

The ROCK series of advanced seminars pursued a twofold aim:

Re-learning city branding. City branding is relevant more than ever. Its reason for being is just giving support to the strategies and operations carried out by the teams and entities in the city who are targeting specific audiences, from tourists to investors. Fortunately, most practitioners increasingly agree place branding is much more than simply a matter of logos and campaigning. Nonetheless, the field still is under the influence of both the rhetoric of commercial branding and the urgency of the short term. As a result, one can still see many short-sighted practices ending in lack of consistency, low impact in the long term and poor empathy with local stakeholders and citizens. The ROCK seminars were conceived as a re-learning exercise or just an introduction to innovative city branding, not strictly from a conventional marketing perspective, but above all from an integrated urban development approach.

Rising awareness of the potential of cultural heritage to branding & marketing the contemporary city. A high number of cities have massively invested in their built heritage. However, the capitalization of cultural heritage in terms of branding and marketing is often constrained to the city of the past and the visitor economy sector. Otherwise, there are a number of angles associated to cultural heritage led urban regeneration, not always visible enough, which turn heritage into a driver to brand & market the city of today and the city of tomorrow. They range from emerging technologies and smart city solutions applied to heritage management to build heritage as new urban workplaces. The ROCK seminars were also designed as an opportunity for city marketers and their partners to get aware of this potential and test how the adaptive reuse of cultural heritage, which links to urban futures, can be translated into unique stories and compelling images to draw the interest not only of visitors but also investors, innovators and the local population.

KEY MESSAGES



Meaning and scope of city branding

Logo & motto-based conventional place branding seems to work homogenizing places instead of promoting distinctiveness and differentiation. Brand is only a metaphor when applied to cities. It is actually about building up and communicating compelling local identities. In this perspective, a broader understanding of culture and cultural heritage can work as a “back to basic” to cultivate uniqueness.

City branding is just about building up a unifying narrative of the city. It’s about creating more unity and exploiting synergies between the different city marketing practices. In this view, city branding is basically an organisational challenge. Hence, city branding doesn’t come to replace the different sector-focused city marketing practices. On the contrary, its reason for being is to give support to the operations carried out by the entities working in destination marketing, cultural events, inward investment, etc. Those specialized marketing teams targeting specific audiences will keep a vital role for sure, now within a new context where synergies can be fully exploited and the set of city messages and stories will gain in consistency.



City narratives and imageries

Narrative is the first and most fundamental - Mayor of London's promotional agency London & Partners say that their mission is “to tell London's story brilliantly”. Nonetheless, that narrative is not only about the “who we are”, but the “who we want to be” as well. That is why place branding is so instrumental to urban economies and places in transition, and in urban regeneration.

Somehow, place branding is about the art of linking messages (narrative power) to images (symbolic power). The photographic image lacks of narrative strength. On the contrary, it holds symbolic power. In the popular “The Photographer’s Eye”, originally published in 1966, John. Szarkowski says that “the function (of photographic images) is not to make the story clear, it is to make it real”. That is why, in place branding, text and image alignment is so crucial. None of them has enough communication power by itself, both need each other.

Logos & mottos can play a role, but not always, and never the main role. They attract the spotlight so powerfully that the more strategic side of city branding often remains overshadowed and underestimated. From a visual communication point of view, promoting a more appealing city’s visuality can be much more effective and durable than visual identities and logos. Indeed, no-logo can often be the right way in city branding.



Telling stories linking heritage to future-oriented issues. What storytelling?

The mainstream, conventional approach of heritage is to qualify the city as a destination. The new approach is making cultural heritage work as a driver to a broader range of audiences and city marketing practices. It means promoting stories that connect heritage to future-oriented issues, such as contemporary art and creative industries, entrepreneurship, innovation spaces, technology, social innovation, etc. In this attempt, a number of questions come up, namely:

- How to tell this kind of stories in a way that cultural heritage really works as a distinctive driver?
- What attributes of heritage are being re-activated again? Memory, architecture...?
- What future-oriented issue the story is working for? Some kinds of stories seem to happen more often or are more visible than others. Why?
- Who from the story would be capable and available to enhance/update the story according to a specific grammar or storytelling?
- This has to do with content marketing somehow. On the capability to tell good stories. Any training needs in this respect?
- Is he/she aware of the city's brand values and current strategy? Framing the stories into city's big narrative.



Trends concerning main target groups

- Investment, business and innovators
Inward investment attraction is evolving rapidly as many cities and regions are not so focused on the "war for jobs and dollars" but in the fight for knowledge and talent. Individuals are now targeted, alongside firms and organizations. In this context, the arguments to seduce the entrepreneurial creative class, as well as firms and innovators of the knowledge economy, are different to those from a recent past. Consequently, a new promotional language has emerged, closer to B2C rather than a B2B logic, where the emotional connection matters. This includes career opportunities and lifestyle, in addition to the usual location factors related to cost of living, taxation, etc. The city has now to be communicated as a functional business place alongside a unique urban experience (cityscape, cultural agenda and amenities, environmental quality...), which unavoidably leads to a more integrated approach in the way cities market themselves, and that's precisely the city branding field. In this view, culture and heritage have a broader role to play.
- Visitors
Dichotomy between the host and the guest is getting blurred, since increasingly visitors (do not call them tourists!) wish to experience the city as locales and therefore want to be targeted as such – e.g. they are more interested in the ultimate painting exhibition in the city or the music weekend agenda than in conventional tourist circuits and attractions. In this view, some communication initiatives targeting visitors also may work for residents and vice-versa – e.g. around 40% of VisitOslo's Facebook followers by 2015 were

residents, who are also constantly feeding Oslo destination brand with their tips and contributions. This trend opens kind of “fast track” to city brand teams to consider the local population as a main target group as well.

- Locals

Branding the city should not be something disconnected to the local population. It can be helpful to enhance social cohesion and raise sense of place, where culture and cultural heritage have certainly a wider role to play. Likewise, innovative place branding approaches and techniques can be supportive in urban regeneration projects and to socialize city’s flagship projects and emerging processes that need to be installed in the collective imagination. It’s simply about internal marketing, which is indeed a very political issue.



Communications

Addressing the question of communication channels & actions in today’s city branding & marketing is not only a matter of migrating to digital-based initiatives. A first step for cities is to make a conscious choice on their particular mix of tools, which may include all-time formulas duly revisited (advertising, city ambassadors, visitor centres, media awareness...), along with others resulting from a wider conception of what a communication action can be. That is, setting aside a campaign-oriented understanding of city branding should lead to other subtler ways of marketing the city, less costly, less invasive and less obvious.

For instance, Lisbon is one of the most active cities in Europe in promoting high-quality visitor merchandise, which may be seen as a communication action itself or at least an attempt to enhance a better city’s visual culture. Turismo de Lisboa, along with EGEAC, the public body in charge of culture, promote and welcome new design proposals from creative firms every year, which are then traded at the official “Lisbon shop” and other gift shops of museums and visitor attractions. In this way, Lisbon takes advantage of its vibrant local creative ecosystem in order to continuously renovate its tourist merchandising and related stuffs representing the city, which are usually associated to a kitschy style.

TELLING STORIES. 10 TIPS

Increasingly, today's city branding and marketing is about promoting, gathering and eventually curating and showcasing a flow of good stories from selected stakeholders and active citizens, rather than delivering official promotional material. Hereafter some tips on what storytelling:

1. The story should motivate readers to discover more by themselves. This even means putting our own perspectives in question. Head of Bologna's museum network Roberto Grandi says the following: "we want to guide the visitor to discover Bologna in the most natural and instinctive way possible. We want to suggest random immersion, not a prearranged itinerary, and not even a priority choice. We do not want to be the ones to tell him/her what is important for us; we want him to discover the details that are of interest to him/her. We do not want to tell him/her about Bologna, but rather it must be he who offers us his/her personal story".
2. City branding & marketing is about promoting the benefits honestly. It is not urban or social analysis. Anyway don't overclaim, and avoid propaganda style. Things are not perfect. Don't be paternalistic or use a condescending manner. We are seeking for inspiration rather than advice.
3. This is about insights not facts. Don't do the Wikipedia. Never use an accumulation of facts and figures. At their best, they are just ingredients for a journey made up of curiosity and empathy. Nonetheless, facts & figures provides accuracy and credibility.
4. Don't be predictable. For instance, from time to time, try non-linear ways of storytelling. As far as possible avoid clichés, such as the creative city, lively streets everywhere, etc. Use the extraordinary elements that heritage have naturally to underline the uniqueness and strength of the story.
5. Don't focus just on one person, like a hero-like story. Try to focus more on the action, on what happened, or what is going on. The (collective) action is more important than the personal one. The question is how, not who.
6. To be continued. Catch the attention and build up an active audience by asking questions or leaving questions in the air. Ellipsis is a useful resource. The audience can be the co-creator of the story by filling the gaps. It might be a "never-ending story" somehow, not exactly closed with a proper ending.
7. Be brief and straightforward. It is known scientifically that the number of people scrolling down a page to finish a story is a very tiny fraction of those who began. If the text is shorter enough that the readers don't need to scroll down we could avoid some defectors. We know more than we can tell.

8. Text and image matching is essential to get compelling stories. So, in this context visuals are not postcards, but they should tell the story too. As far as possible pics should bring together architecture, city landscape, urban icons and above all people, in a kind of specific urban semiology serving the city branding field. To illustrate a story, better to use just one prominent picture, carefully selected, instead of a mosaic of tiny ones.
9. Catchy titles matter. The average length of a page visit is less than a minute, and most of this time is spent “above the fold”.
10. And don’t forget the bigger picture. Main purpose of a story within a city branding context is to make the city narrative closer and understandable. This is why the “big narrative” of a city should be wide spread, in order to get an inflow of well-aligned good stories.

Strand 1. NEW URBAN USES

- *Sapiegos*, Vilnius
- *Technopolis*, Athens
- *Progetto Malerbe*, Bologna
- *Polo del '900*, Torino
- *Uzupis Republic*, Vilnius
- *Coffee in the space*, Torino
- *Somes river*, Cluj-Napoca
- *Hales Market*, Vilnius
- *Controviali*, Torino

Strand 2. CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

- *Paintbrush factory*, Cluj-Napoca
- *Traces of Commerce*, Athens
- *Mouraria Creative Hub*, Lisbon
- *Dourgouti Island Hotel*, Athens
- *Rito Domestico*, Bologna
- *Village Underground*, Lisbon
- *Kinokultura*, Skopje
- *Centre of Interest*, Cluj-Napoca
- *Jonas Mekas Visual Center*, Vilnius
- *Plartwo*, Torino
- *Playable Bologna*
- *Kale Cultural Fortress - MoCA*, Skopje

Strand 3. SOCIAL INNOVATION

- *Marvila Library*, Lisbon
- *Victoria Square Project*, Athens
- *Prefabric growing houses*, Skopje
- *Feel your city*, Cluj-Napoca
- *Meet the Skopjans*, Skopje
- *é Bologna*, Bologna
- *Parque Intergeracional Marvila*, Lisbon
- *Academy of Change*, Cluj-Napoca
- *Open Schools*, Athens
- *Kontrapunkt*, Skopje

Strand 4. EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

- *Lojas com história*, Lisbon
- *Il Cinema Ritrovato*, Bologna
- *Vilnius Talking Statues*, Vilnius
- *KappaFuturFestival*, Torino
- *Unforgettable futures*, Vilnius
- *Comunale Music Village*, Bologna
- *A Barriera c'e il mare*, Torino
- *Vilnius Street art*, Vilnius

BAROQUE FOR THE FUTURE



Sapiegos Techpark, Vilnius

GIVING AN INNOVATIVE BAROQUE TOUCH TO THE NEW TALENTS AND BUSINESSES

Can the biggest technology hub for start-ups and tech businesses within ICT sector in the Baltics and Nordics be baroque? Yes, that is possible. *Sapiegos Techpark* is an amazing example of recovering heritage for the most innovative use. A huge and centrally located baroque site has become the core of entrepreneurship, talent and culture in Vilnius.

Sapiegos Techpark is a good example of how new technology can give new life to heritage. And how heritage can host innovation efforts making them more sustainable and green. You don't need to go to any suburb if you can work just in the city centre, related to the history and the identity of the place.

Work and leisure; citizens and visitors can go hand in hand. No more non-places for working or living, please. Life can be better with a little bit of a baroque touch.

More at: <https://vilniustechpark.com/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #tech facilities; #new emerging sectors; #public use; #investment; #startups and innovators; #locals; #visitors



THE CITY AT FULL THROTTLE

Technopolis,
Athens

URBAN FUTURE IS NOW PROPELLED BY ART AND CREATIVITY

Technology is a propeller for urban development. It was and it will be. But as we know well, the time of industries located inside the cities is gone, thankfully. And right now we don't live anymore in metropolises surrounded by belching smokestacks. The air is getting better and the dream of a clean and green urban routine is day by day getting closer.

Nowadays we got different “factories”, those propelled by art and creativity. And some of them are smartly using those huge abandoned spaces of old industrial heritage. *Technopolis*, in Athens, is a project where the past and the future of the city go finally hand-in-hand. The old gas industry of the city offers a new hub for fun, arts and creativity, a space for being enjoyed while understanding the facts of urban history.

Athens is definitely at full-speed. Using all its unbelievable resources to develop a new identity for that to come.

More at: <http://www.technopolis-athens.com/web/guest/home>

Tags: #heritage sites; #industrial heritage; #new urban uses; #cultural industries; #social innovation; #public use; #experience economy; #startups&innovators; #locals; #visitors



WATCHING HOW THE WEED GROW

Malerbe, Bologna

CITIZENS AS GARDENERS OF THE URBAN SPACE

Recovering spaces for being enjoyed in the historical centres of the cities is not an easy task. The high density of buildings and the use of most of the streets and squares for traffic have been a tradition along the last decades.

Reappropriation of those spaces for the use of the citizens is a key element to give some life back to the city centre. *Malerbe* is a project that pretends to create new uses for the spaces in the Zamboni area in Bologna. Piazza Scaravalli was used as a parking lot for a long time. *Malerbe* tries to recover the space for entertainment, chilling out and dialogue.

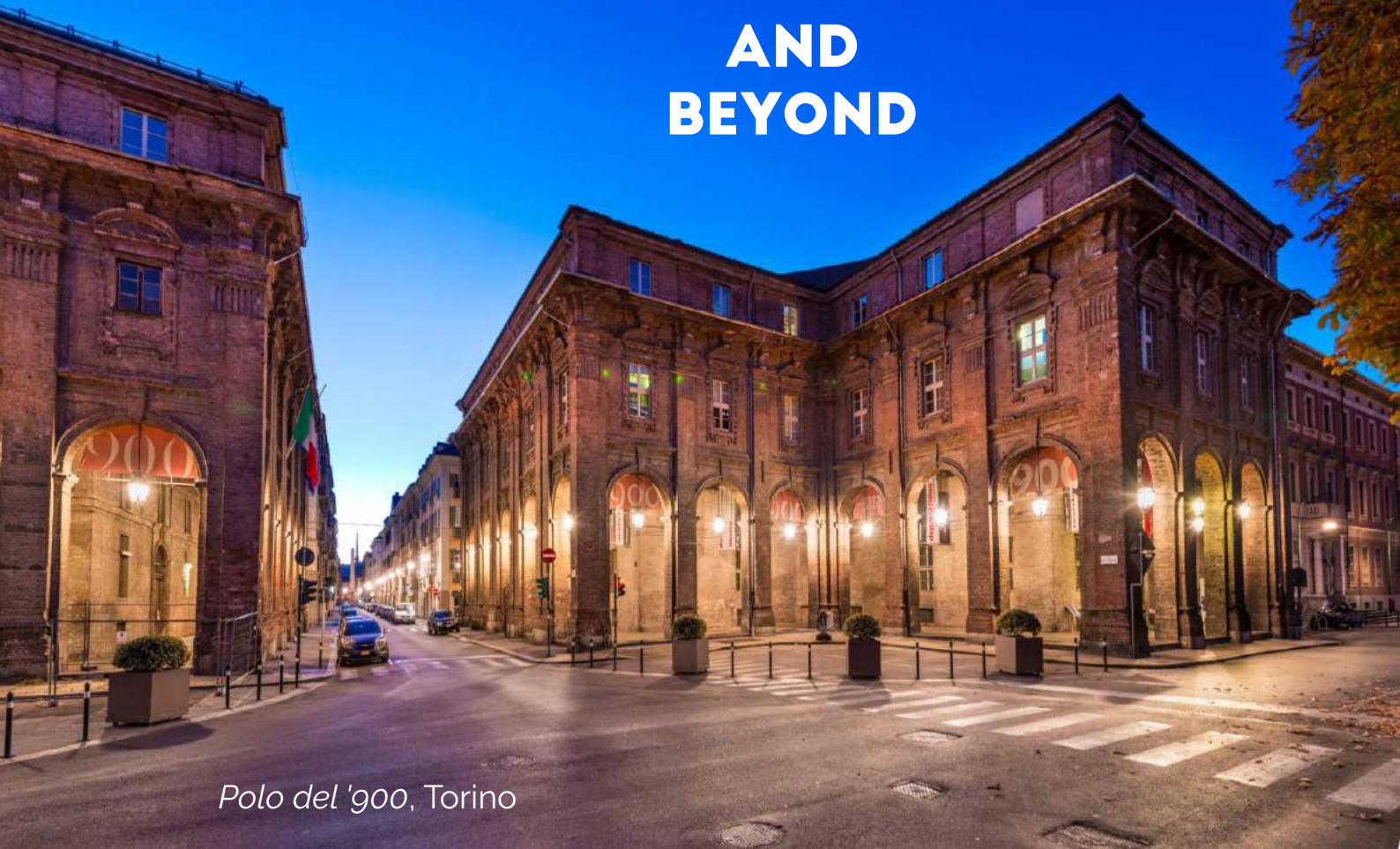
There residents and students can finally know better each other. Both are invited to use the space actively, as a dynamic garden where they can see how the bad weed grows, or how green can be the city if we just adapt some sites and take care of them. Participation and inclusion are crucial for this new way of looking and making the city. A new ecosystem of urban biodiversity.

Now urban life can bloom again.

More at: <https://bologna.rockproject.eu/malerbe/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #social innovation; #public use; #locals

ONE CENTURY AND BEYOND



Polo del '900, Torino

THE DOCUMENTS OF THE PAST ARE THE CLUE FOR SELF-KNOWLEDGE, THE
CLUE FOR BUILDING UP THE FUTURE

Novecento was not only a colossal movie by Bernardo Bertolucci; and it was not only a complex century of revolutions, wars and, after all, economic development and peace. From now on it is the brand new attraction pole of the city of Torino. A place to look at if you are one of those who think that self-knowledge is a key element to build up the future.

A massive site where the documents of a whole century can be dived into. And that's not a simple metaphor: 9 km of them (all aligned, that's true) are waiting for you. A space for alleviating your lust for culture.

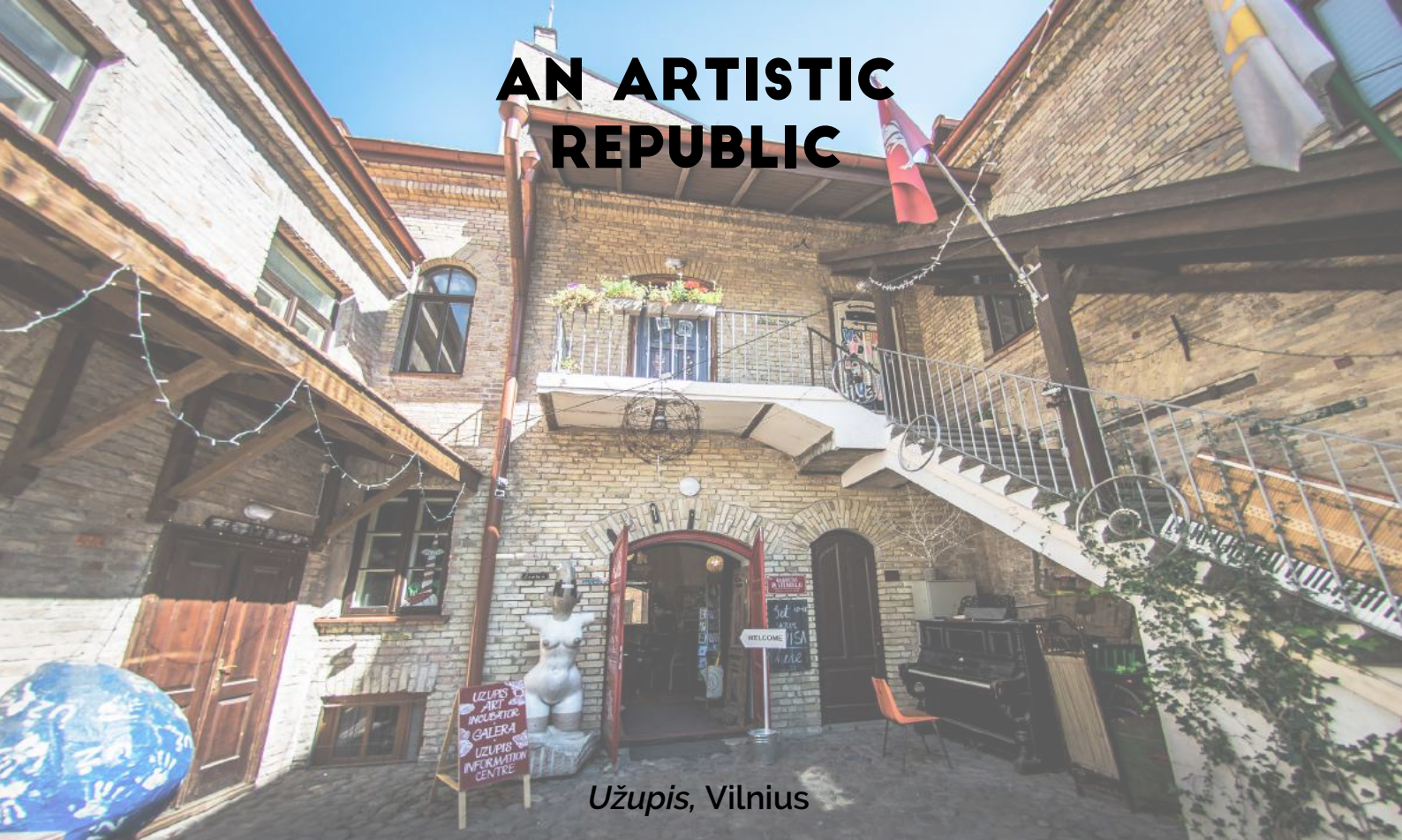
But *Polo del '900* is not only there for researching and celebrating the history of the XXth century. It is a new way of using the spaces of an old military quarter putting the eye in the future. It is one of the biggest cultural centres you can imagine, an open space for innovation and democratic participation.

Open to all citizens 365 days a year.

More at: <http://www.polodel900.it/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #cultural industries; #public use; #investment; #startups&innovators; #locals; #visitors

AN ARTISTIC REPUBLIC



Užupis, Vilnius

SETTING THE RULES FOR A CREATIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The bohemian way of life is far different from others. An independent republic for the arts sounds like a distant dream, a utopia. *Užupis* is the final achievement of that utopia, a whole neighbourhood able to set its own rules. Just a republic for the artists.

In the old town of Vilnius, *Užupis* has its own constitution, flag, currency, ministers, anthem... everything you need so far in order to be really independent. A whole lifestyle.

But it was not always a happy story: During the Soviet era, the authorities let *Užupis* go to ruin, and it quickly gained notoriety as the roughest districts in the city. Since Lithuania regained its independence in 1991, artists came and took advantage of the cheap accommodation and free space to be reused creatively. Revolutionary urban changes can be funny. With an avant-garde sense of humour, as they claim: “Don't fight, don't win, don't surrender”.

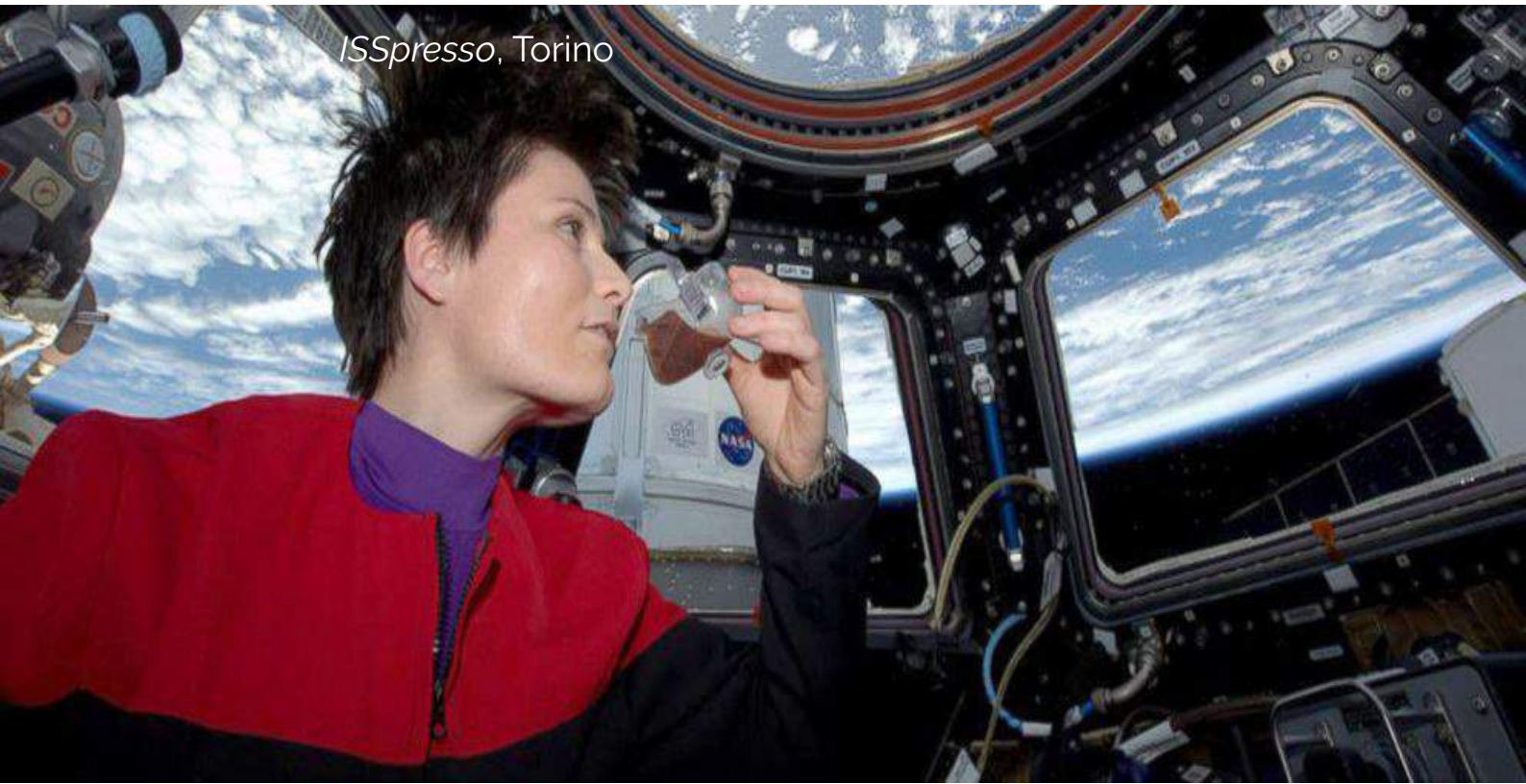
Moreover, the city's art academy is located across the bridge from Bernadinų Gardens. Now its thriving creative community hosts regular fashion festivals, concerts, exhibitions and poetry evenings.

An artistic republic is just a place to be.

More at: <http://uzhupisembassy.eu/> ; <http://www.umi.lt/en/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #contemporary art; #creative & cultural industries; #social innovation; #startups&innovators; #locals; #visitors

COFFEE CALLS EARTH



FINALLY A GOOD COFFEE EARLY IN THE MORNING IN OUTER SPACE

On 3 May 2015, the first espresso coffee was drunk in the space. And we wonder, how was possible that those heroes of the space could work that high without drinking proper coffee early in the morning until that day? It's a mystery.

This amazing achievement arrived with the creation of *ISSpresso*, the first capsule coffee machine at the space, which has been installed on the International Space Station (ISS) by the Italian female astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti. Made by Argotec, an Italian aerospace engineering company based in Torino together with Lavazza, it is the result of the most advanced scientific research and a symbol of the Made in Italy – Made in Torino brand. And, after all, a relief for astronauts. They can finally feel like at home but 400 km over the Earth.

The machine is able to prepare a perfect espresso in the typical space weightlessness condition, and it can also improve the living condition of astronauts by heating water and hydrating food. The project has helped to enhance the knowledge about the principles of fluid dynamics and conditions in micro-gravity, and has generated several patents for terrestrial and extraterrestrial use.

Maybe that's one small sip for a woman, but one giant leap for humankind.

More at: <https://www.lavazza.it/it/magazine/coffee-culture/caffe-nello-spazio.html>

Tags: #intangible heritage; #new technologies; #investment; #startups&innovators

THE RIVER IS THE BRIDGE

Somes river, Cluj



THE CITY SHOULD GO WITH THE FLOW OF NATURAL HERITAGE

Cities are not only the built heritage but also the natural heritage that shapes it: the surrounding mountains, hills, valleys, forests... And every city definitely needs some water. The river is a key element in the development of a city. A core, an axis. If we want to think about a greener and more sustainable urban future, we need to include natural heritage on that vision, for sure.

Somes river, in Cluj-Napoca, shouldn't be any more a line dividing the city, but a whole ecological system and a public space to be valorised, preserved and enjoyed all over its course. And this is the main aim of the new project for recovering the spaces of the river for the city. As a work in progress and long-term, it definitely needs the participation of the citizens to make it really for their own.

The *Somes* is envisioned as an urban connector of public spaces and green areas as well as the primary circulation path for pedestrians and bicycles. Thus, this proposal aims to bridge that gap between the river and the city. All in all, the objective is to enhance urban mobility, redefining the existing urban connections by extending them to the water's edge, creating a visual and physical connection between the city fabric and the river.

The river can definitely bridge that gap.

More at: <https://studiopractica.com/es/work/rio-somes/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #natural heritage; #new urban uses; #social innovation; #public use; #investment; #locals

TASTING THE PLACE

Hales Market, Vilnius

THE BEST OF CULTURE IS TASTY

Definitely, markets are some of those places where you can really understand the culture of a place. And taste it, sure! *Hales Market* is one of the oldest in Lithuania. Just re-built at the beginning of the XXth century over the oldest XVth century “Horse market”. Stories and stories. Food and goods; goods and food along history.

While the metal roof structure of this market reminds us the time of the Eiffel Tower at the beginning of the century, you can nowadays find an authentic place where you can enjoy the best local products of the area. At the same time, you can try the new tastes of entrepreneurs in Vilnius.

Good design, unique recipes, organic food, flavours, colours, are there for you to understand that market is not a simple tradition in Vilnius, but something where putting the best of culture.

More at: <http://www.halesturgaviete.lt/en/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #intangible heritage; #new urban uses; #public use; #experience economy; #investment; #startups&innovators;
#locals; #visitors



A PLAYGROUND TRICK

Controviali, Torino

plac
architecture
urban design

RECOVERING SPACE FOR PEDESTRIANS MIGHT BE THE WAY FOR A FUNNIER AND HEALTHIER CITY

Every city got its own tricks. When you know them, then you are a proper inhabitant that proudly can offer help to those who visit the city. If you are from Torino, definitely... you know how to use “*controviali*”, the system of service roads all around its long avenues.

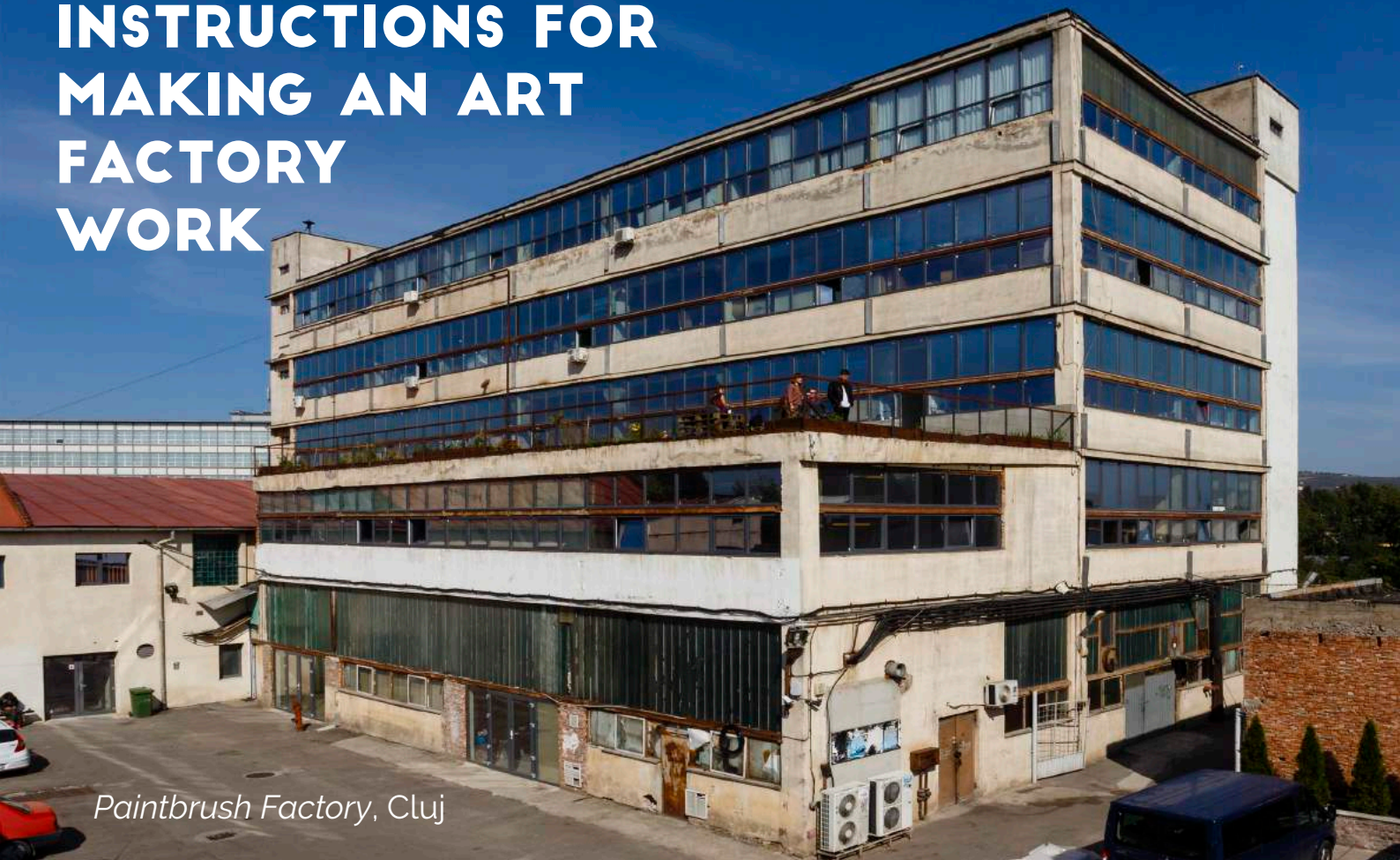
They were thought to be green promenades in their origin, the urban extension that took place in the XIX century. But today, they are used as traffic lanes and parking slots. Just a forgotten public space. A huge structure of around 120 km. to be redesign. How?

This silent heritage is a huge opportunity to rethink the city, to show the possibilities of a new backbone for it. *Controviali* might be a driving force for enhancing a greener and more sustainable urban future, offering space for cycling paths, gardens and leisure. The reappropriation of these spaces might develop a new identity and image of Torino. The trick for a more human, participative, healthy and funny urban future. A playground for being used by citizens.

More at: <http://www.pla-c.eu/>

Tags: #new urban uses; #social innovation; #public use; #investment; #locals; #visitors

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING AN ART FACTORY WORK



Paintbrush Factory, Cluj

THE MISTAKES FROM THE PAST CAN BE A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR CREATING ART

What is the first thing we need for painting? That's right, a brush. Maybe that's why *Fabrica de Pensule (Paintbrush Factory)* is such a convenient place to work for the stunning new generation of artists coming from Cluj-Napoca, the vibrant city placed in Transylvania.

Here we can find a real hub for painters, a whole centre where the sum of all the creative people propelling the engine is much more than every individual. Even though some new stars are emerging. It is really a factory, and you could find some references in the Warhol one or the Bauhaus.

But this is special. In this case, they got it confronting the dark side of the past of their city, taking advantage of the re-use of an abandoned paintbrush factory. And that's is not a metaphor, it is real.

Great minds, great artists, great ideas to overcome the fears and mistakes of the past. Cluj is definitely efficiently working as a cultural city. And it is showing clearly the instructions on how to do it right: Putting the culture to work.

More at: <http://fabricadepensule.ro/en/>

Tags: #industrial heritage; #new urban uses; #contemporary art; #creative & cultural industries; #startups&innovators



THE BEST STAGE FOR NEW IDEAS

Mouraria Creative Hub, Lisbon

SHOWING THE LAYERS OF THE PAST AS AN INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE TO COME

Since its birth, during the XIIth century, Mouraria has a whole history associated to delinquency, poverty and exclusion, even if it had always been a territory with unique potentials, among which are cultural and built heritage, and its centrality in the city of Lisbon.

It is in this context that, in 2010, Lisbon's Municipality made the decision to deeply requalify Mouraria and Intendente areas. At the Lagares Quarter, in the foot of Graça Hill, *Mouraria Creative Hub* appears in a privileged location, an old mansion-house of the XVth century just looking from the heights to the rest of the city.

It has a complex past and a tricky structure, typical in this area of the city: a rare remnant of the Islamic space organization, a stone wall from the XVIIIth century, traces of fountains, tiles... Finally, a space articulated through different levels and yards, showing somehow the different layers of the city.

All this is as a proof of the amazing survival capacity of the city through History, and a sample of the profound creativity of its citizens along time.


Mouraria Creative Hub is a unique opportunity for the promotion of cultural and creative industries in the city of Lisbon and the support of job creation and young entrepreneurship. A perfect site then to follow suit and find inspiration.

This strong identity is there to be used as a powerful engine for new ideas.

More at: <http://www.cm-lisboa.pt/en/mouraria-creative-hub>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #creative & cultural industries; #investment; #startups&innovators

CLIMBING UP THE WALLS



Dourgouti Island Hotel, Athens

WALKING, TALKING, SMELLING, TOUCHING, ENJOYING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AS A WAY OF RECONNECTING IT

Dourgouti, a former slum area needed some momentum. Shielded off by a wall constructed for the Olympic Games in 2004, and a hotel that literally turned its back towards the neighbourhood. The artistic collective UrbanDig initiated the *Dourgouti Island Hotel* project to face this secondary position.

The project brought people attention to the hidden resources of the district, those that need to be dug under the first visible (and not always pleasant) layer. The aim was to make citizens active, aware of their closer urban landscape, full of sometimes undisclosed spaces, stories, smells, sounds, sights... A whole cultural richness to be discovered, valued and creatively used.

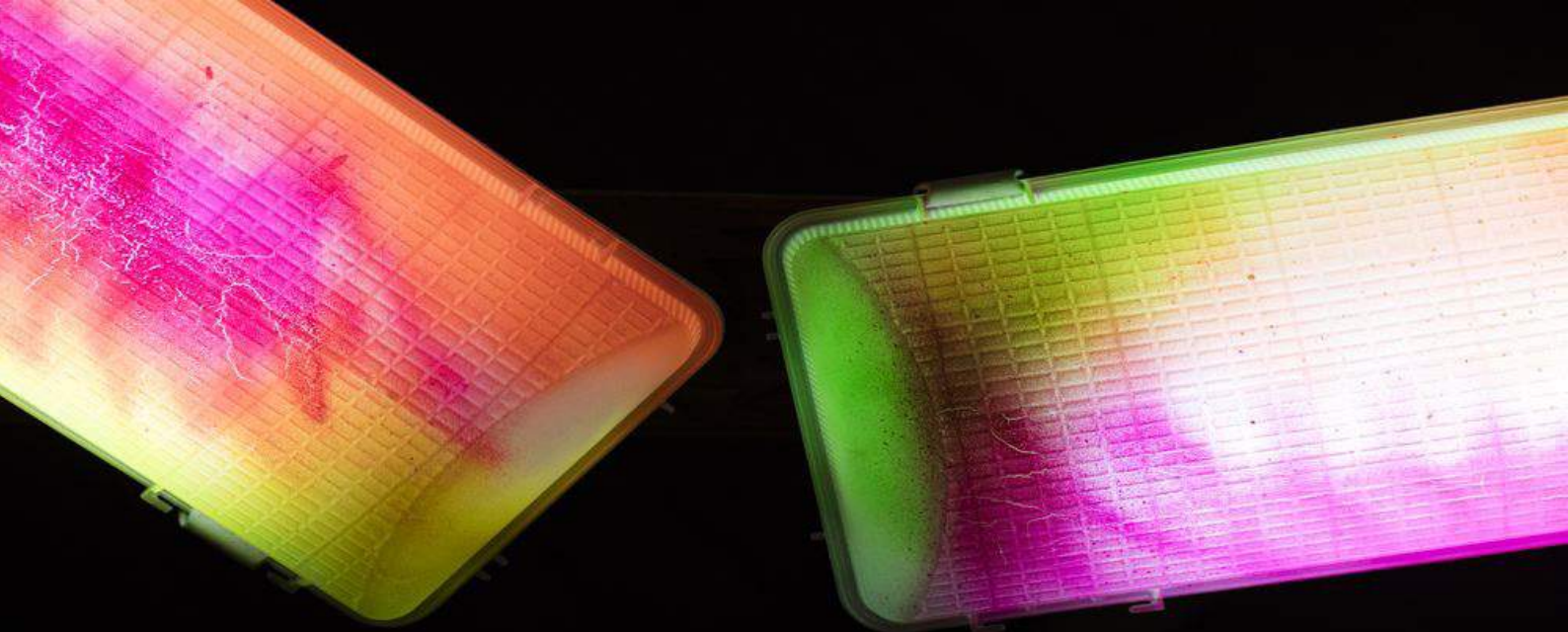
This grass-roots perspective was used for researching and mapping the district collective memories, assets, skills, interests and limits. The tours, walks and actions were part of a larger organized neighbourhood festival, including theatre, dance, exhibitions and music. Like that, the streets were finally shown as the scenery for the art performance of the daily routine. Probably the best way of exploring the space; the best way of realizing that a new urban geography could be imagined and built.

The city shouldn't be a hurdle race, but walls can be climbed anyway.

There is a nice view over there.

More at: <https://www.urbandigproject.org/dourgouti-island-hotel-project>

Tags: #new urban uses; #contemporary art; #creative industries; #social innovation; #public use; #experience economy; #locals; #visitors



LIGHTNING UP THE CITY

Rito Domestico, Bologna

TURNING ON THE STREETS TO SEE THE URBAN BRIGHT SIDE

Light is a powerful communication element; an immaterial heritage. It is a creative resource to be used by artists. Intangible but memorable. Light can change the perception of the space. It is as well a key aspect to enhance the liveability of a city.

ON, a contemporary art project born in Bologna in 2007, is determined to research the power of light in our everyday urban routines. And how light can fill them with a magical and unusual touch. Something that can arouse the curiosity of the citizens and make them reflect on the contradictions and potentiality of urban spaces.

Domestic Rite, around 'La via Zamboni', the university area of the city, was a collective attempt to show the possibilities open in the use of public space as an artistic lab. The medieval city centre of the city, with its arcades and narrow streets, is sometimes seen darker than bright, not only physically, but in the minds of the citizens of Bologna. A place of social conflicts. But the young energy and vitality of the Zamboni area are huge, and the contrast makes the sparks of light even brighter.

The installation consisted of a series of bright objects, chandeliers of all kinds hanging out of buildings, palaces and houses which were arranged like bunches of grapes or in long lines under the arcades surrounding Piazza Verdi.

Light, with its revitalizing power, was capable of domesticating the common area and turn the streets into a “public house of wonders”.

More at: <http://www.onpublic.it/exhibits/detail/ON-2016>

Tags: #heritage site; #intangible heritage; #new urban uses; #creative & cultural industries; #contemporary art; #experience economy; #locals; #visitors

RECYCLING URBAN LIFE

Village Underground, Lisbon



A GOOD BREEDING GROUND FOR CULTURE SHOULD BE FULL OF TALENT,
CREATIVITY AND HERITAGE, ALTOGETHER.
THE REST IS EASY

Artists and culture professionals are not lonely people. The romantic view of a genius apart from the rest of society doesn't exist anymore. The new concepts for working in contemporary culture are based on being connected, being together, creating networks, so, why would you need to rent an office or an atelier for yourself?

So, it is much better to build new spaces where creative people can share knowledge, ideas, inspiration. *Village Underground (VU)* is that kind of new international platforms, an independent cultural space unifying two distinct aspects: co-working and multicultural areas for concerts, exhibitions, theatre, conferences...

The project is based on the renovation of unused equipment and locations, to be reshaped and brought to life. In Lisbon, the area consists of 14 shipping containers transformed into office space, a conference room and café made from renovated double-decker buses from the transport company Carris. The workspaces are designed to host professionals from creative industries, amongst others.

The idea is to be dynamic, lively, creating the breeding ground for art and creativity, taking into account and recycling urban heritage and memories as a resource. Transforming them in new energy and life for the city.

More at: <http://vulisboa.com/>; <http://warehouse.pt/projects/village-underground-yard-lisboa/>;

Tags: #new urban uses; #creative & cultural industries; #contemporary art; #investment; #startups&innovators



CULTURE IN MOTION

Kinokultura, Skopje

AN OPEN STAGE FOR FREEDOM. A MONUMENT TO THE DYNAMICS OF CULTURE

Kino Kultura it was and it is “a monument of culture”. Its nowadays re-used building is related to numerous events in the past. One is related to the setting of the first public drama theatre performance of the future Macedonian National Theatre, in Macedonian language, staged on 20th December 1944. This connection to events and memories make us understand the historical and emotional importance of this kind of buildings, at risk of ruin and disappearing at the beginning of the XXIst century.

This space has a significant role in the development of socio-cultural life in the city. *Kino Kultura* is a unique space in regards to its structure and programme orientations. It is a space with a distinctive agenda of contemporary art and culture content, with an accent on the performing arts but also a content developed by the larger citizens’ community, reflecting the recent and important questions in society. It is an open space freed of top-down decision-making. A space that provides freedom of speech, diversity and expression. *Kino Kultura* is an open space in which artists and cultural workers have the opportunity to develop and present contemporary concepts in the field of performing arts. The scene is open for collaboration. Transparent, democratic, independent, diverse.

Kino Kultura still needs to be re-think and re-boost through the entire restoration and use of the building and the model of open governance. Still a work in progress then. But, you know, culture is always in motion. Just the way it is.

Alive.

More at: <https://www.kinokultura.org.mk/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #creative & cultural industries; #contemporary art; #social innovation; #public use; #locals; #visitors; #startups&innovators



THE SPOT TO LOOK AT

Centre of Interest, Cluj

THE PLACE TO BE IN THE EMERGING CONTEMPORARY ART SCENE OF CLUJ

There is always a main point of view. The right place where you should stay. The perfect point where your eyes are just naturally ending. Every composition, painting, sculpture, photography... have that central spot where all the attention is going. There is a whole art of attracting attention and catching the eye. But how to hold the interest after that?

Centre of Interest is a community of art-makers (artists, designers, creative minds) and distributors of contemporary art (galleries, artist-run-spaces, project rooms), based in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. In *Centre of Interest*, they know very well that is not just about attracting the sight but the mind of the audience. And there is a lot: loads of proposals, highest quality. An amazing industrial building reused; an old factory recovered as a perfect framework to make art run.

There is much more than a spot, there is a whole picture to look at. We got here a must be, the art centre where you should go if you want to be in the right place and the right time in Cluj.

Don't look away.

More at: <http://centruldeinteres.art/>

Tags: #industrial heritage; #new urban uses; #contemporary art; #creative & cultural industries;
#startups&innovators; #locals



GLIMPSES OF BEAUTY

Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Centre, Vilnius

MOVING AHEAD FOR ART AND BEAUTY

Lithuanian émigré heritage is just amazing. Just mentioning the names of George Maciunas and Jonas Mekas then you just know Lithuanian creativity is at the top of contemporary art and cinema.

So *Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Centre* is the way of recovering that heroic past to be used as a propeller for new creativity to come. A way of reuniting a “dream team”. It is not a museum but a platform. It should carry the flag of the avantgardes of all of the arts.

Fluxus, the avant-garde movement in the mid-XXth century, defend the idea of an impossible separation between life and art, both so fluid, so interconnected that there is no way to imagine them being apart.

Life might be seen as a piece of Art.

Art might be felt like a piece of Life.

With that in mind, breaking down barriers and frontiers, this centre should be just a place for working creatively and aesthetically; for living, producing art and making fun. For moving ahead seeing glimpses of beauty.

And some beauty is more than enough for making life valuable.

More at: <http://mekas.lt/>

Tags: #contemporary art; #digital heritage; #creative & cultural industries; #experience economy; #visitors; #locals; #startups&innovators



THE MIRRORED CITY

Plartwo, Torino

FALLING IN LOVE WITH CONTEMPORARY ART IS AN URBAN DUTY

Contemporary city and contemporary art are very much in love, and you know it. Torino knows it. Contemporary art is not offering any more isolated spaces for contemplating works in silence. Art is not sacred as it used to be. The proposal is, instead, being a propeller for creativity and innovation, able of opening new spaces to be used by citizens, to foster the local community. It is permeable, dynamic and everchanging, just as the urban life is.

Located at the Barriera di Milano, *Plartwo* is going to be a new contemporary art centre in Torino, one more for an impressive list. The Piedmontese is probably one of the most important world capitals of art right now. It is, as well, another step in the evolution of an area that suffered the impact, first, of the bombs of the II World War and, after, of the industrial crisis. But as we said, cities are moving, overcoming obstacles, and Barriera the Milano now is a new pole for innovation, a laboratory for developing a new kind of city: greener, smarter and more creative.

That's why *Plartwo* will be a mirror towards the city. Literally, a space for urban reflection. Its mobile façade will be a metaphor of the metamorphosis of the city. But the city is not Narcissus and won't be there just looking at itself. It is going to go further, and it is going to be faster, not falling into the enchantment of its own beauty anymore.

A wise move.

More at: <http://www.fondazioneplart.it/>

Tags: #contemporary art; #creative industries; #cultural industries; #public use;
#experience economy; #investment; #visitors; #locals

PLAYING THE CITY

BOLOGNA
SI METTE
IN GIOCO

**PLAYABLE
BOLOGNA**

UN VIDEOGIOCO PER SCOPRIRE
BOLOGNA E I SUOI MUSEI

Playable Bologna, Bologna

SETTING THE URBAN GAME BOARD

Old city centres have been used for a long time as literature and cinema sets. That's an amazing way of spreading the word of the excellence of urban heritage all over the world, for sure.

But, the other way back, heritage can be as well an active element for playing the city, for involving citizens on knowing the stories behind the façades, squares and museums. Heritage and new technologies are good partners. Digitising heritage is probably the best way to preserve it and make it worthy for the population, inhabitants or foreigners. *Playable Bologna* is a contest launched by the Bologna Municipality to develop a videogame that talks about Bologna and promotes it through its heritage and monuments. The project tries to explore all these assets for making city's heritage more enjoyable.

After all, self-knowledge is the key for curating the city's heritage, for valorising it properly. And having a playful mood is a good state of mind if we want to achieve a more active and dynamic city. Having fun is the best attitude for learning.

Let's play!

More at: <https://bologna.rockproject.eu/bologna-si-mette-in-gioco-playable-bologna/>

Tags: #digital heritage; #new technologies; #creative & cultural industries;
#experience economy; #investment; #startups&innovators; #visitors



A FORTRESS FOR CULTURE

Kale Cultural Fortress - MoCA, Skopje

THERE IS NO BETTER WAR THAN THE ONE
FOR DEFENDING ART AND HERITAGE

On the top of the city of Skopje are two symbols looking at the city: the Kale fortress and the MoCA museum. The past and the future, old heritage and new creativity to understand the powerful energy of this ancient new capital of Europe.

The complexity of Skopje is not a metaphor, it is real, and it can be noticed easily everywhere, and especially from this viewpoint controlling the urbanscape. The site is a proof of the city's resiliency and capacity of survival along history, even after violent or dramatic episodes like the 1963 earthquake or the Balkans political instability at the end of the XXth century.

However, despite their considerable potentials, these two sites exist in mutually isolated spaces, with vast uncultivated park area, surrounded by other completely inadequate and substandard buildings. There are no visible signs of urban planning here.

Kale – Cultural Fortress is a project that aims to draw public attention to this valuable area in the heart of downtown Skopje and open room for public and expert discussion about the direction of its future urban design.

The cooperation between MoCA and the Faculty of Architecture is designed to offer vision and concepts that would transform this important part of the city into a dynamic, attractive and strong gravitational cultural centre.

More at: <https://msu.mk/?exhibition=kale-cultural-fortress>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #creative & cultural industries; #contemporary art;
#public use; #investment; #startups&innovators; #locals; #visitors

STITCHING THE PIECES OF THE CITY



Marvila library, Lisbon

A MEETING SPACE FOR AVOIDING URBAN DISCONNECTION AND SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION

Marvila is an area of hopes postponed. A neighbourhood of Lisbon full of potential but actually in the middle of nowhere. Pretty close to the city centre and to the area of the Expo'98. The railroads split the district in two: on one side, social housing; on the other, a newly gentrified area close to the river, where new trendy business are suddenly appearing. Spaces appear finally disconnected and disaggregated. The challenge is how to re-use and connect its empty spaces to the lively rest of the city around.

Marvila library project appears as a new way of creating public spaces able to stitch the pieces of a city and its society. That is why first of all it was necessary to open a dialogue with the citizens in order to make the project participative, honest and democratic. It was not about offering something from the outer space, but building altogether. The point was to make the citizens participants, contributing to solving the problems of the district.

So, finally, we got the largest public library in the city, assuming its role as leverage for social inclusion, inverting the trend towards neglect that was the destiny of the area. The library is bringing something new and recovering the past of a peculiar district (restoring and re-using the former Quinta das Fontes). *Marvila Library* is offering a space for culture and dialogue; and a space for listening to all the people, of all ages and backgrounds. It is a social space where different realities finally meet up, assuming that the diverging dynamics of a city can collide at some point and make it stronger.

More at: <https://www.trienaldelisboa.com/ohl/en/place/biblioteca-municipal-de-marvila/>;

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #social innovation; #public use; #locals



SOCIAL SCULPTING

Victoria Square Project, Athens

COMMUNITY RESOURCES ARE, DEFINITELY, GOOD MATERIAL FOR ART

Talent and creativity are required for constructing a better urban future. Consequently, artists might be at the front of urban development. But how to do it? Maybe not using marble anymore and just thinking about how they could work hand in hand with the citizens.

Conceived by artist Rick Lowe in collaboration with fellow artist Maria Papadimitriou as an ongoing social sculpture during the documenta14 exhibition in Athens, *Victoria Square Project* has evolved into an open community centre in the place of a previously vacant shop in the multicultural neighbourhood of Victoria Square, at the heart of Athens.

But... it is really possible to construct a social sculpture? Of course it is when the people are using the assets of the community for building that collective piece of art. Pretty easy: Just people in action building networks and relations.

Cultural and historical resources might be crucial for urban resilience. In this deprived area of Athens severely hit by the financial crisis, the neighbourhood is reappropriating finally the vacant spaces for developing a new community, more active and self-conscious of its problems and aims.

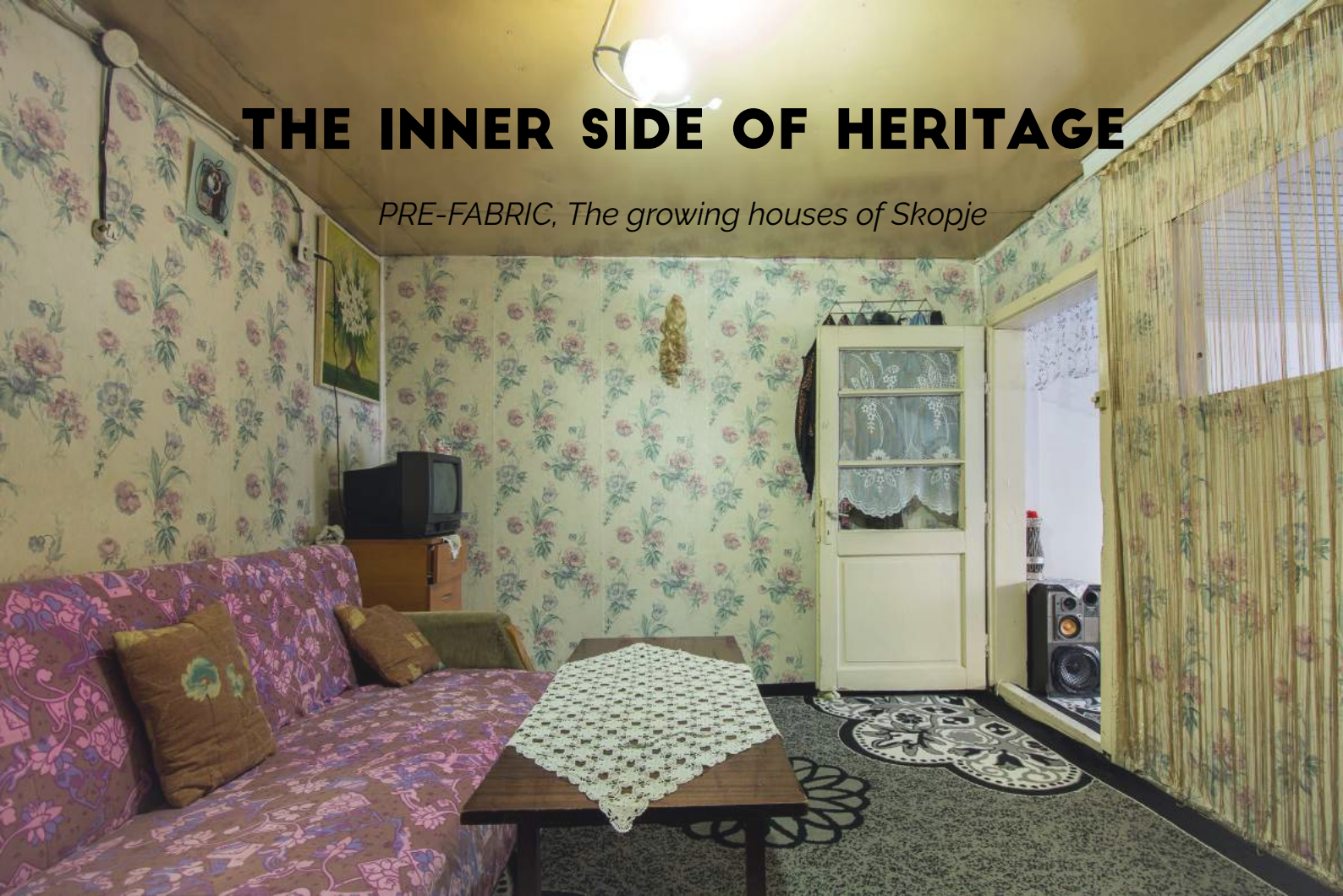
Heritage and creativity can show that collaboration makes things happen.

More at: <http://victoriasquareproject.gr/>

Tags: heritage sites; new urban uses; Contemporary art; Social innovation; public use; locals

THE INNER SIDE OF HERITAGE

PRE-FABRIC, The growing houses of Skopje



THE SURVIVAL INSTINCT OF A CITY IS FED BY "ORDINARY HEROES" OF HERITAGE PRESERVATION... AND RECONSTRUCTION

On July 26, 1963, at the height of the Cold War, a cataclysmic earthquake destroyed large areas of the city of Skopje. This natural disaster resulted in a wave of international solidarity and led to a joint humanitarian project that united worlds that were ideologically poles apart. The partial or total destruction of up to 80% of the built structures suddenly made 150,000 inhabitants – three-quarters of the population - homeless. The provision of housing space became the most urgent task. The goal of this first reconstruction phase was to ensure that a large proportion of the population would have a fixed abode by winter.

The settlements were to consist of prefabricated, mostly single-story houses; the first deliveries of prefabricated elements arrived in Skopje only ten days after the earthquake. By the end of 1964, a total of 14,068 dwelling units had been built that provided around 70,000 people with a new home. Roughly 2,500 houses were sent from other countries - 914 of them as gifts. An aid that has been inscribed in the city's collective consciousness over decades.

The architectural import of these prefabricated houses has lastingly shaped the face of the city. After being inhabited for more than 50 years and despite undergoing repeated extensions and transformations, the basic structure of the settlements and the elements of the architecture from Finland, Mexico, or the USA still remain visible.

These *growing, prefabricated houses of Skopje*, have become the dense fabric of the city, a whole way of understanding the heritage in the form of physical, historical and emotional memories. The inner side of it, commonly hidden.

After all, we are being invited to understand how people live and transform the city: visiting their houses, understanding their experiences.

Come in! Heritage is alive and growing on tireless in front of us.

More at: Mijalkovic, Milan; Urbanek, Katharina (2018). *Pre/Fabric. The growing houses of Skopje*. Wieser.

Tags: #heritage sites; #intangible heritage; #social innovation; #civic use;
#locals; #visitors





feel your city

MAKING SENSE OF THE CITY

Feel Your City, Cluj

HERITAGE SHOULD BE CLOSER, PERCEPTIBLE TO EVERYBODY

Can just a group of teenagers change the way a city is felt? Yes, they can. Some students from the «Onisifor Ghibu» high school in Cluj realized that not every citizen or visitor could enjoy properly the most visited city in Romania, and decided to change this. How?

They installed a panoramic board in braille on the «Cetățuie Hill» - the belvedere spot of the city. And that was not all, but just the beginning. Then they decided that the next step was to install information boards in braille at the touristic points around the main square in town. The money for this project is coming from a festival they are organising every year in their high school: called «Ghibstock», a nod to «Woodstock».

The teenagers wanted to facilitate access to education for their colleagues and organised a «treasure hunt» where participants could discover cultural and historical places in the city centre. They also organised different initiatives and campaigns with the aim of highlighting how prejudices affect the way people interact. As well in the cultural context of heritage.

So they go on and on, creating a whole *Feel your city* movement. That's how from an apparently small movement is possible to change things, to make the city more accessible for everybody, more enjoyable. A fairer place.

No excuses. No exclusion.

More at: <https://cluju.ro/feel-your-city-proiectul-inedit-al-unor-elevi-clujeni-vor-sa-faca-un-cluj-turistic-si-pentru-persoanele-nevazatoare/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #social innovation; #public use; #experience economy; #locals; #visitors



SHOUTING OUT FOR THE LOVE (OF A CITY)

Meet the Skopjans, Skopje

TALKING ABOUT THE CITY IS A GOOD WAY TO ENHANCE IT

Every city needs to be discussed. The place where we live is the main topic of our everyday urban routine. We talk about the streets, neighbours, problems, challenges, pride or fun of living altogether. About the concerns as well.

Citizens really love their cities. That is a universal rule. They are their entire world. Citizens care about the place they live and they want to participate for doing it better for the future.

That is the main resource in the project *Meet the Skopjans*, a platform where every person can speak out loud about the city of Skopje. Like that everyone can feel inside a whole collective project, a whole society and a way of life and can offer their point of view, their frustrations and desires. And, most of all, they can feel that they are being heard.

This platform creates a dialogue, an exchange of information that talks live about the moments that are being felt inside the city. Almost an emotional approach to the relationship between people and the city. So they can show how much they need (and love) each other.

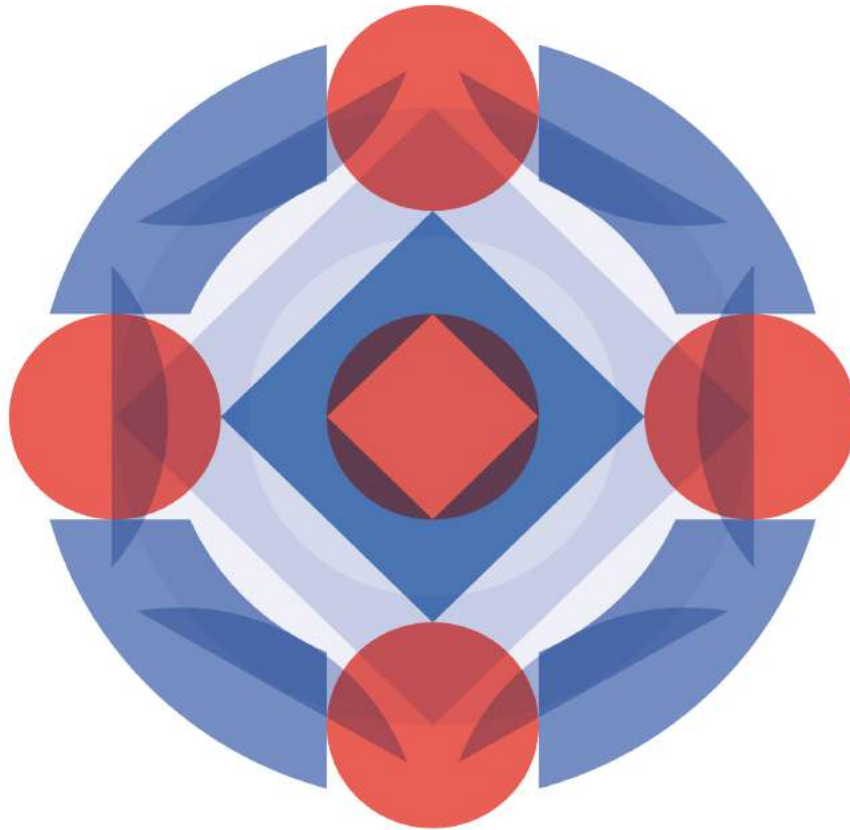
Through short statements and pictures, the Skopjans offer solutions, ideas or suggestions for some current issues. Every citizen can contribute and give ideas to make the place where they live a better place.

Thankfully, the city is being told, the city is being heard.

More at: <https://skopjelaab.mk/zapoznajgiskopjani/>; <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/zapoznajgiskopjani/top/?hl=es>

Tags: #new technologies; #social innovation; #locals

THE ALPHABET OF THE CITY



é Bologna

URBAN LIFE MIGHT BE JUST AN EXCUSE FOR CREATING NARRATIVES. JUST WORDS
AND IMAGES TO BE USED, STORIES TO BE TOLD

What if a city should be defined just in one image? Just in one phrase? That is an impossible task. There is no possibility of simplifying something so complex and everchanging.

That is the challenge of branding a city. You know you are going to lose the battle since the very beginning. A city is full of experiences, stories, heritage, people coming and going... a whole past and an infinite future to come.

The best way probably is listening to its citizens and visitants. Creating platforms to communicate. That is how the project *é Bologna* is so perfect, so convenient. Because it is a whole alphabet, a whole vocabulary to connect people, to make them feel identified to the city. Based on some basic elements of Bologna heritage, this logo is for everybody, it is there for being appropriated and felt like yours every time. A code for sharing. Just type it.

Finally a logo for everyone.

More at: <http://ebologna.it/> ; <http://www.fondazioneinnovazioneurbana.it/progetto/bolognacitbranding>

Tags: #heritage sites; #digital heritage; #social innovation; #public use;
#locals; #visitors; #startups&innovators; #investment

FILLING THE EMPTY CITY

Marvila Parque Intergeracional,
Lisbon



COLLECTIVE DIALOGUE AS THE MAIN RESOURCE FOR URBAN REGENERATION

If we want to build a new kind of city, more sustainable and democratic, it is clear that it is necessary to consider the citizens as active participants in it. *Marvila Parque Intergeracional* is one of those projects trying to fill the gap between urban development and inhabitants, institutions and neighbours.

Marvila is an extraordinary place in Lisbon, in a very peculiar historical and geographical situation. Full of vacant lots, big buildings appear disconnected, isolated between highways and train tracks. Moreover, the population of Marvila is becoming older and the number of residents is decreasing. In parallel, the area closer to the river is suffering a process of gentrification, and new locals, restaurants and art galleries are appearing in what is a new trending zone for entrepreneurs.

In this particular situation, everything began with a first meeting with the community to start a dialogue and clarify their intentions: it was decided that a public park for children and the elders should be a good move against both, isolation and gentrification. The new public space would work as a social aggregator tool, offering a playground and chairs and tables so the elders can meet and play cards games while watching their grandsons playing.

The construction was a collective effort with the participation of students, volunteers and community members. *Marvila's Parque Intergeracional* is a precious example to stress the importance of a process based on a close relationship with the municipality and deep involvement of the community in all the phases. As everything happening in the city, this is a work in progress, only possible with the will of institutions and citizens. Tagus river is the only one able to look at all the changes, unmoved.

More at: <http://mar-vila.org/projetos/>; <http://warehouse.pt/projects/parque-intergeracional-de-marvila-lisboa/>

Tags: #new urban uses; #social innovation; #public use; #locals; #visitors

LEARNING HOW TO CHANGE



Academy of Change, Cluj

IF THE FUTURE IS GOING TO BE DIFFERENT, THE BEST KNOWLEDGE IS THAT ONE ABLE TO METAMORPHOSE

Urban future needs propellers, engines able to make the city different, better, in its foreseeable development. And, how to do it then? Cluj-Napoca has in mind that if institutions are there, it is for being a platform to take advantage of the talent and resources already in the city. A new kind of academy. Knowledge is just there, open, to be reunited and used.

What is just true and crystal clear is that the future will be different. So, the best knowledge to spread is about change. The best heritage is the one able to adapt to different circumstances.

We don't need to set culture rules in stone if they are naturally moving. In the end, the only academy to establish is an *Academy of Change*. A way of boosting inspiration and collaboration through citizens, professionals, associations, institutions working in the cultural field. Altogether, pushing in the same direction, it will be easier not just imagining, but creating a sustainable, smarter and greener urban life, that one lead by the cultural sector.

The key is training, building, exchanging, collaborating. There is strength in numbers. It is possible to teach and to learn how to change. For better, sure.

More at: <https://cccluj.ro/academia-schimbarii-en/>

Tags: #cultural industries; #social innovation; #public use; #locals; #startups&innovators; #investment

24-HOUR LEARNING PEOPLE



Open Schools, Athens

LEARNING HAS NO SPACE OR TIME LIMITS

In Athens, like in any other city, schools used to have a rigid timetable, and they were closed after the morning session. Meanwhile, the citizens were looking for some room where they could spend the afternoons and organise valuable collective activities: workshops, concerts, exhibitions...

In the end, schools were thought to be a perfect place for going on with more informal learning. Schools are since then open the whole day (including weekends) as spaces to be enjoyed by citizens at full strength. A large sort of activities is being carried out now in a network of 21 schools spread all over the city. 21 new sites to be used for leisure and education.

Based on this program, the school buildings are converted into living cells of the neighbourhood: meeting points, with recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities for all age groups. The activities available at *Open Schools* are proposed by either organizations or individuals and they are then selected through a specific evaluation process and co-organized by the Municipality. The list of activities is regularly updated and enriched to meet the interests and needs of each community.

In a city like Athens, where urban planning has not taken into consideration the need for open and public spaces; the schoolyards, after all, can be used for the benefit of citizens.

A wise and pleasant way of going on learning beyond the timeline.

More at: <https://www.athensopenschools.gr/>

Tags: #new urban uses; #social innovation; #civic & public use; #locals

A CREATIVE COUNTERPOINT



Kontrapunkt, Skopje

CULTURE AS A WAY OF SOCIAL EMANCIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Since 2001, *Kontrapunkt* is a very active organization focusing on the idea of dissemination of culture and cultural production as an urgent social need. *Kontrapunkt* is committed to not lose sight on non-mainstream forms of expression, from new media art to cultural theory, philosophy or activism. The final aim is contributing to a freer society, culturally demonopolize and more open to critical thinking.

As an alternative counterpoint against the traditional and hermetic ideas of how the culture should be presented, *Kontrapunkt* develops new tools and foster activities that stimulate creativity and expression through the field of culture. The main aim is being a platform for enhancing an independent cultural scene and atmosphere in the city.

Since its inception, it has been part of a large number of projects from a local to an international level. Mostly focusing on emancipatory, self-education and community involvement. In collaboration with the publishing house Templum, *Kontrapunkt* has raised its publishing activities translating works of essential authors of contemporary philosophy as Julia Kristeva, Jean-François Lyotard, Slavoj Žižek or Jacques Derrida.

Democracy, inclusion, cooperation, exchange... listening to all the marginalized voices as a duty. Critical culture is welcome.

More at: <http://www.kontrapunkt-mk.org/>

Tags: #intangible heritage; #creative & cultural industries; #contemporary art; #social innovation;
#public use; #startups&innovators; #locals; #visitors

A CITY THAT DOESN'T LOSE ITS NERVE

*Shops with a history,
Lisbon*



PRESERVING THE LIVING MEMORIES OF A STILL ALIVE CITY, THAT ONE PROUD OF ITS UNIQUE HERITAGE, ITS EVERYDAY IDENTITY

A city is much more than its citizens and buildings, much more than the activity taking place there, than the industries, shops, or products to be sold. The identity of the city is found in the preserved memories. In all those things that happened there and make it real and special, unique.

Before globalisation, shops used to be something that made every city, every neighbourhood, especially distinguishable. Shopping and shops can and, indeed, should be an element that makes it different from others. Down through Lisbon's history, trade and commerce have played a particularly important role in the life of the city. And it continues to occupy a decisive place in the economic, social and cultural life of the Portuguese capital today. You can still recognise Lisbon idiosyncrasy through its old shops.

Shopping facilities are both, a differentiating mark of the city, and an economic activity that also generates employment and makes the city be alive. Urban planning, architecture, preservation of cultural heritage and economic activities should be well coordinated in order to help these businesses to survive in the time of internet and immaterial transactions.

Shops with a history is such a necessary tool to make this heritage still tangible. To make citizens proud of their trajectory. Valued and recognised. It is a homage to those things well done, to the stories well-told. To the braves that don't lose their nerve, even in dire straits.

It is a whole exercise of memory. And a high-quality acquisition.

More at: <http://www.lojascomhistoria.pt/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #intangible heritage; #experience economy; #locals; #visitors

IMAGES FOR RECOVERING



Il cinema ritrovato, Bologna

WE LIVE IN THE DANGER OF NOT NOTICING THE BEAUTY OF THE HERITAGE AROUND US

Cinema is surprisingly and dramatically disappearing. Finding, discovering, rediscovering and recovering the images of valuable cinema is a duty. Those are the first aims of *Il cinema ritrovato*, more than a festival, a necessary task of offering the best cinema for all the people. A heritage that is one of the most important elements to understand the XXth century, and still our contemporary world.

In a time where we are all surrounded by images at full speed, everywhere, it is a challenge to take the time to watch, stare and valorise the quality of good films. Some of them surprisingly in danger of being definitely lost.

Digitising is probably the best way to recovering images, and to show them to the citizens. How to spread the word? Making cinema once again a wonderful experience, much more than just entertainment, a social event. And that is the main achievement of the festival, sharing cinema as an unforgettable time, all in the extraordinary and magical space of the historical centre of Bologna.

More at: <http://festival.ilcinemaritrovato.it/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #digital heritage; #new urban uses; #creative & cultural industries;
#public use; #experience economy; #locals; #visitors

THE PLACE WHERE THE STATUES TALK



Vilnius talking statues

HERITAGE CAN TALK BY ITSELF

What if you were just walking around the city and you received a call, you don't know the number and... yes! The character of the statue you got in front of you is talking to you! That's the funny game of *Vilnius Talking Statues*, an interesting way of enjoying the city creating a direct and personal feeling with its heritage.

Like that citizens and visitors can experience new urban routes, getting out of the usual beaten track. And, like that, they can listen to new stories behind what, apparently, is there just standing day by day, rainy, sunny or snowy, in the city. Those silent statues become real through the use of new technologies. And then heritage is alive!

The voices of Lithuanian contemporary writers and performers are connecting us directly to the most recent or further past, from the rocker Frank Zappa to the medieval times of the Grand Duke of Lithuania. Just as heritage is, a wonderful experience of travelling around time and space.

More at: <http://www.vilnius-tourism.lt/en/what-to-see/routes/vilnius-talking-statues/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #new technologies; #public use; #experience economy;
#startups&innovators; #visitors

THE FUTURE OF FESTIVALS

*Kappa FuturFestival,
Torino*



AVANT-GARDE IS ALWAYS AHEAD OF THE CROWD

To be a proper futurist you need to look desperately forward. That's clear. But Futurism, one of the most outrageous currents in the XX century avant-garde, is today a memory coming from the past. Back in 2009, to celebrate one hundred years since the violent irruption of Futurism, Movement Entertainment, a smart-up based in Torino, decided to create FuturFestival. It succeeded, and, after attending 7000 people, it became “Italy's most beloved New Year's Eve party”.

Location is unique: Parco Dora, an amazing park that reminds us of the former industrial past of the city. But even better is the challenge of not making a toast to nostalgia, but being in the avant-garde again, creating a space for fun and innovation. However, it is a non-mainstream product, but a smart move for all electronic music lovers. A must-go for citizens and foreigners.

Little by little evolved into *Kappa FuturFestival*, an event at the avant-garde. Why? Because it is a 100% day time, cashless, sustainable and zero impact on the public finance event. One of the best European Summer Festivals; unmissable according to The New York Times. A truly futuristic experience.

Are you going to miss it again?

More at: <https://www.kappafuturfestival.it/en/>

Tags: #industrial heritage; #new urban uses; #new technologies; #creative industries; #experience economy; #startups&innovators; #visitors; #locals



THE FUTURE WILL BE UNFORGETTABLE

Unforgettable Futures: Visions for Lithuania's Centenary, Vilnius

EVERY HISTORICAL JOURNEY ENDS IN THE FUTURE

After one century of state history, the Centre for Civil Education in Vilnius decided it was time to think about what was done in all this period and, more than that, to imagine what might be done in the foreseeable future.

Unforgettable Futures: Visions for Lithuania's Centenary is a unique example of storytelling, a way of experiencing the History that is not possible using books. A place where you can dive into a whole journey: three periods of Lithuanian history: the interwar, the occupations, and the present are depicted by the most astonishing visions of scientists, politicians and active public figures of those days.

The exhibition presents an undiscovered side of the Lithuanian past, broadening the term of history from mere occurrences to the force of ideas. Even though not all of the 40 visions presented in the exhibition became reality, they reveal a desire to create and improve the human condition even through the toughest times of history.

The shaded exhibition hall with mirror details, a personal tablet, and headphones help to create an intimate environment. With the help of big, immersive visualizations on the walls, visitors are told about the turning points of history that also affected the content of visions.

As the motto of the exhibit says: "The best time to create is now". No doubt.

More at: <http://www.pazinkvalstybe.lt/lt/naujiena/314>

Tags: #intangible heritage; #digital heritage; #new technologies; #cultural industries;
#experience economy; #visitors; #locals

MAKING ROOM FOR AN OPEN CULTURE

Comunale Music Village, Bologna

CULTURAL SPACES MUST BE SHARED AND ENJOYED BY EVERYBODY

The time when culture was a privilege for a small percentage of the population is, obviously, over. All the same, it is very important to make it real, and clear: overcoming rigid traditions and inviting citizens to be open to enter cultural sites. And have cultural sites open, sure. It is just a question of willingness.

That's the point of *Comunale Music Village*, to offer the unique space of the Teatro Comunale for leisure, enjoyment, and culture, of course. The fantastic terrace of the theatre over the Piazza Verdi is located at the heart of the historical centre of medieval Bologna.

So, finally, after centuries, the Bologna's Teatro Comunale, a privileged space, it's not only an opera venue and it's open to being visited for free. For all the people. The community. A meeting point where citizens can understand each other better and forget about conflicts, and those old fashion discussion about class, level, way of living, dressing and ownership.

Life is definitely better if we know how to use what we inherited, if we know how to make the most of public spaces and a rich and diverse musical legacy. Nobody owns it. It is just there to be enjoyed.

There is more and more room for open culture in the city. The theatre is, after all, truly communal. That is not just a name.

Doors are open. Culture is open.

More at: <https://www.bolognawelcome.com/home/vivi/eventi/calendario-completo/comunale-music-village/>

Tags: heritage site; intangible heritage; new urban uses; public use; experience economy; locals; visitors

THE SEA IS JUST HERE

A Barriera c'è il mare,
Torino



IF VISITORS ARE A LITTLE BIT CONFUSED,
LET'S SHOW THEM THE BEST PLACES TO GO

A neighbourhood is full of things to see and to do. But who knows really the good places to go? Yes, the citizens, of course. That's the point of *A Barriera c'è il mare*, a project where the people that really know well this area of Torino can communicate to the world where are the best locations to enjoy their place: art, pictures, food, crafts... Now, it's impossible to be lost. Now, we all know that we should go there, take a look, and taste!

The creation of a website and a tourist map with this bottom-up perspective is the way of valorising properly the heritage of a place, not always noticed because of the inertia of everyday routine. So, the experts are the citizens, and the citizens are the ambassadors. A process for being conscious of the power of the community and creating a stronger identity. A smart proposal for a new kind of sustainable tourism, that of being kindly invited to see and be hosted.

Barriera is waiting for you, just like a day of swimming and diving at the sea.

More at: <http://www.turinbarriera.it/it/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #intangible heritage; #social innovation; #public use;
#experience economy; #local; #visitors; #startups&innovators

WALLS TO LOOK AT



Vilnius Street Art

MAKING EVERYDAY URBAN ROUTINE COLOURFUL. MAKING THE URBAN WALLS MEMORABLE

Street art makes cities more colourful, more interesting, more enjoyable. Urban space finally becomes a playground where we can achieve different layers of comprehension. The Vilnius street art tour, with the help of the *Vilnius Street Art* festival, has changed the way the city is walked and watched.

The graffiti is there increasing the awareness of the buildings and neighbourhoods, and showing how much can change the urban space with the interventions of talented people, coming and going, expressing their creative ways of looking, making streets funnier, a better place.

Street art is collective, is ephemeral. Now the walls need to be looked at. Citizens and visitors need to be wise and sharp. You never know what is going to appear or disappear. And every time at every place the city offers a unique experience that will never be the same.

More at: <http://www.vilnius-tourism.lt/en/what-to-see/routes/street-art-vilnius/>

Tags: #heritage sites; #new urban uses; #contemporary art; #public use;
#experience economy; #startups&innovators; #visitors; #locals

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