re-educating the city in the name of

the radical raccommodeuse



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contingent cabarets of Calais



This project explores the possibility of a new form of community for Calais. For around 150 years the city's social and political cohesion was programmed by its prosperous lace production. This historical context is researched and presented as a community precedent, consisting of an archive of ideologies, actions, concerns, relations and inhabitings which include the manifestation of its workers' movement.

In recent years, Calais has been the focus of international media for its dense presence of displaced peoples heading to the UK; the UK border regime has been criticised for the 'hostile environment' inflicted on those displaced on French soil, a label that refers to the routine eviction and destruction of camps, removal of food and belongings, as well as verbal and physical abuse. Recent humanitarian crises in Calais coincide with the final stages of decline of its lace industry. The 5,000 workers dismissed in the last 40 years perhaps experience what Latour describes as unsteady ground, "that we are all in migration toward territories yet to be rediscovered and reoccupied" (2017).

presents as challenge to, supports

alternative with same core ambition

In Calais, various anti-solidarity laws punish those seen to aid displaced people, even though solidarity is one of six principles in the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights. Still recovering from the downfall of lace, the Calaisien response to the plight of migrants and refugees usually registers between animosity and apathetic, though a minority of locals show greater concern and commitment. This project approaches the problematic from the perspective of those on the inside of the Calais community.

The idea is that through subverting the current trajectory of this community, instead creating a network of people with a common project, more empathetic attitudes and renewed solidarity practices, the city can become instrumental in refusing the oppressive border regime and opposing the walling of states and the neoliberal logic that underpins it (SDG 11). The project deals with different scales, focusing mainly on creating changes in the urban environment, while theorising about resultant social change, and possible system change. To reiterate, the project imagines architecture that aims to transform community in order to demand political change.

It considers the current Calais community as subject to *noopolitik*, a concept by contemporary sociologist Maurizio Lazzarato (La politica dell'evento, 2004) that describes collective mind control via media. In resisting this, the project is a critical re-education (SDG 4) in challenging the current narrative. The character of the radical raccommodeuse is invoked to style this movement. Raccommodeuses, women. did the final stage repair-work in the lace industry. We add radical to imagine repair as an anarchic practice of counter-power/

this project responds to the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

through the promotion of inclusive, diverse community with bottomup democratic functions.













sharing and care-taking from within communities and replaces a competitive mentality with a co-operative one.

through the re-education project of repair that emphasises skill-

through the recognition and platforming of marginal voices and concerns by building new solidarity and mutual aid.

counter-conduct, against the capitalist doctrine of consumerism, which includes the blockading and commodification of industrial heritage buildings in Calais. Radical repair is a movement for caring for the non-human, such as decaying buildings and tools and belongings, but also for those other people involved in the project. The camaraderie of lace-work is rekindled, empathy built from the mutual toil of attending to disintegration (SDG 10). Repair-work seeks to open up discourse on alternative political realities: instead of dreading the inevitable, the process of intervening into decay is one of imagining other futures.

One political future imagined as fruition of this movement is an autonomous Calais, a city on strike. This would entail the forging of new solidarities, a galvanizing project and the realisation of self-governing possibilities; the community becomes a vocal unit with bargaining power, platformed by its position at an important and visible checkpoint in the enclosure of fortress Europe. To facilitate this community, we imagine a confederation of cabarets, styled for the continuous repairwork of the raccommodeuse, that serve as houses for the people, combining functions of co-education (classrooms, cinema, library) and community decision-making (congress, meeting rooms, archives, publishing).

This is a programme of two strands which represent situated phases of this communitybuilding project (the immediately actionable and the imaginary) while also describing the ongoing praxis (actions, imaginings) that sustain the momentum of the movement. The project follows this process, exploring the space-making involved at the beginning stages of occupying, strategizing, and designing the cabarets. As the project of repair is integral, I also seek to investigate how architecture can interact with its own maintenance and repair, as well as engage others in its care. This is a meta-design process that the project inhabits, speculates and lays out a possible blueprint for. The project thus describes one trajectory of the movement it imagines, and one possible formulation of the cabarets' programme and their architecture.

#### lexicon

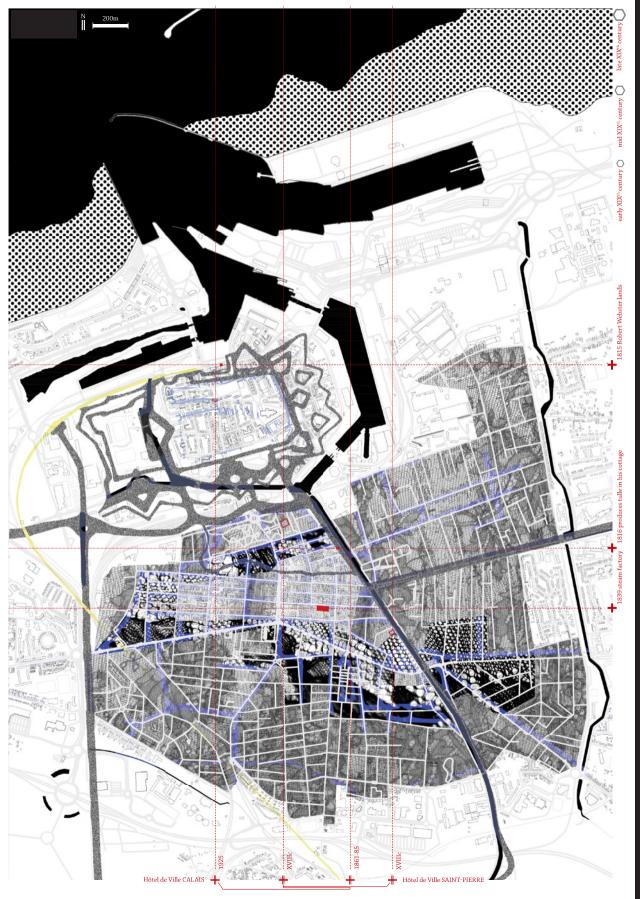
definitions adapted from Merriam-Mebster online dictionary.

- **solidarity** \_ an awareness of shared interests, objectives, standards, and sympathies creating a psychological sense of unity between different groups.
- **direct democracy** \_ in which people decide on policy initiatives directly as opposed to representative democracy in which decisions are made by an elected group.
- **federalism** \_ the distribution of power in an organization (e.g. a government) between a central authority and constituent units.
- autonomy the quality or state of being self-governing / self-directing freedom and especially moral independence
- anarchism \_ a political theory holding all forms of governmental authority to be unnecessary and advocating a society based on voluntary cooperation and free association of individuals and groups.
- neoliberalism \_ policies of economic liberalization, including privatization, deregulation, free trade, austerity; reduced government spending to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society.
- externalise / internalise \_ to attribute to causes outside the self / to incorporate external notions within the self as conscious or subconscious guiding principles.
- exteriorise / interiorise \_ to make exterior, give exterior form to / admit to the inner mentality, make personal.

#### concepts

- habitus \_ habits of the body and mind responsive to a context of cultural and class relations. / Pierre Bourdieu biopower \_ techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of population. / Michel Foucault.
- noopolitik \_ cognitive control techniques exercised on multiple brains operating in unwitting collaboration. / Maurizio Lazzarato
- terrestrial \_ used as alternative to *citizen* to describe somebody with responsibilities and agency related to their existence in a place, however transient or legal their residence there. / Bruno Latour
- collective interior \_ a cognitive arena shared by a community that encompasses collaborative knowns, ideas and questions. / author





# earning rom lace

Lace has shaped the city of Calais since its illegal import by English labour migrants in the early 19th century. From its customary transmission, to its galvanising effect in the industrial-era workers' struggle, lace has been variously memorialised and mythologised in Calaisien culture. Simultaneously object, industry, lifeblood, the realisation of lace raised this small port town to, ostensibly, lace-making capital of the world by the early 20th century.

The first lace manufacturer landed at Calais' fortified shores one morning in 1815. Smuggled in parts from various places on the English coast by French sailors, he set up his Leavers loom in a small house near the canal; at first the industry inhabited marginal, often domestic space, in attics, cellars, even stables and kitchens. For fifty years, a steady stream of workers from the tulle town of Nottingham crossed the border to Calais, despite the fact that the emigration of artisans and the export of machinery was initially explicitly prohibited.

The small town of Calais, of meagre progress or resources, grew steadily with this new population. Soon, the noisy lace machines were banished to the suburb of Saint-Pierre, where workshops were scaled up into larger factories.

When in 1843 machinery export became legal, the number of Leavers lace machines in Calais was already in the thousands, constituting a significant additional population that began to influence the city's built fabric, re-siting the town hall, introducing a rich residential architecture and new civic and worker building typologies. These reflected new economic, social and political forces that constituted the advent of a lace community.

Properties of lace itself have also contributed to a theoretical background to this project; as decorative encasement of the body, lace is a second skin and outline. With windows veiled in lace, the material denotes a conceptual border to the city community, while expressing internal unity by advertising lace in-common, as well as emphasising architectural notions of intimacy and interior. To Calaisiens, the design and production of lace celebrated a shared knowledge and creativity, concretised in a beautiful and valuable commodity.

*layered lace histories no. 1*: illustrating the growth of the lace district and its canalways (grey), and the movement of a key political and industrial site (red)

In the boiler house, the stokers load the coal, engines trace and turn in panelled offices adjacent. Design papers rustle. The draughtsman lays the grid and roaring, gates slamming. Needles flicker. Pencils counts in stretch, the pattern perforators turn coloured lines to numbered boxes.

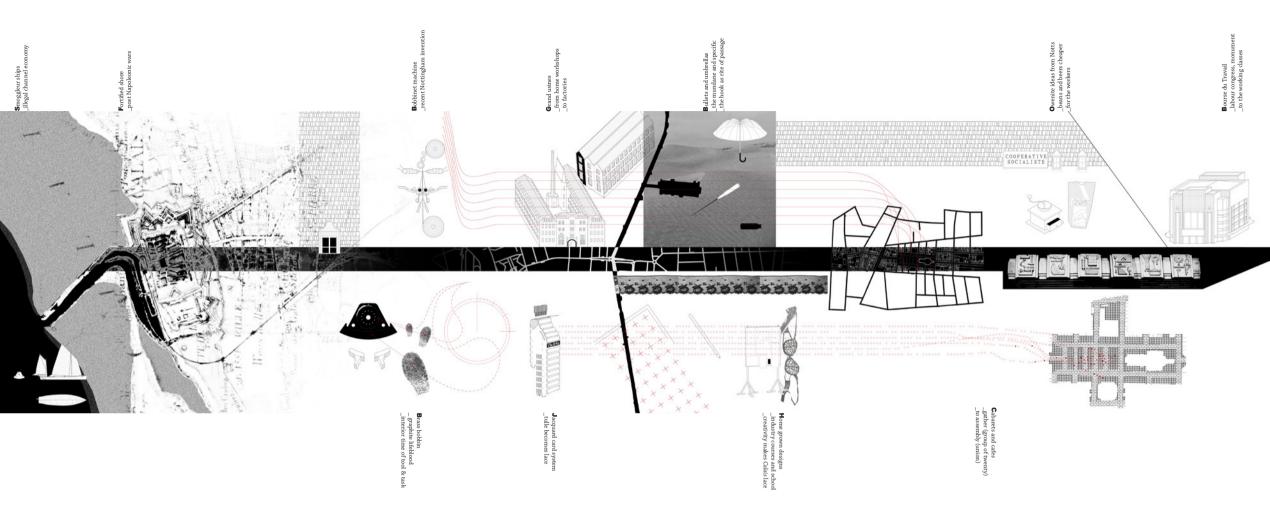
working the pedals with his feet. Card punchers were Using both hands, he steadily transcribes two streams of information in perfect unison. The cards are then reels. These workers read the fragility, the character concerned with perfect tension. The beamers ready Bruno Depriester is the last card-puncher of Calais. sewn together, checked and installed into the loom. the gimp and broderie threads that make the motif. and quirks of the thread; balance finders, tightrope Described in literature with great admiration, they He demonstrates, his eyes reading the code, in his produced hundreds of cards needed for a pattern. Thrown and twisted, the yarns are transferred to the piano-men of Calais, rhythmic and dexterous. walkers. They know how to wind for each speed, fabric is in the future, but these operatives know mind translating it to punches, pressing the keys how to teach threads not to cross or break. The with his fingers to make the hammers fall, and Warpers lay the gridlines in thread; they are

symbolise the Leavers. One hundred metres of thread four thousand are done. As she makes her swift and a set of twenty, working to their millimetre spacing Still upstream of the machine, the wheeleuse winds the brass bobbins which, along with their carriages, makes a good bobbin, but first she threads them as precise motions, she expresses her responsibility to estimating, slotting them in. Then she winds them up from the drum and again, until the machine's the downstream, to the twisthand. they lay its foundations.

the fitter removes and reassembles as the thread runs The bobbin presser stacks and compresses, heats and raccommodeuses, women do the repair-work. Motifs are meticulously re-made or mended using hand and foot guided embroidery machines, then bundled and forensic scale and substance of the epidermal ridges cools, all bobbins made equal. The inspector checks, unrolled, to be clipped, scalloped and colour treated short. The twisthand, the tullist, the prince of lace devotedly tends the machine; the mechanic mends. all guided by hands, all to the millimetre, to the eyed, touched and chalked for its flaws. The Downstream comes the lace, racked and

of a fingertip.

# 2.1. lacework tools motifs



*Objects to icons.* an abbreviated time-line of p(lace) as semiotic study, 1815-1940.

# 2.1. lacework tools & motifs

Clues

#### interior time \_

an experience of time passing at a different speed

#### habitue

habits of the body and mind responsive to a contex of cultural and class relations.

Tracing the potency of lace in the Calais community included studying the physical world of the factory. Work adhered to both the clock and rhythms of different machines, a pace determined by the resistance of cardboard to a metal hammer, the strength of a silk thread, the molecular oxidation of bleach in fibres, all these in concert with the body of the worker.

The workstation thus consists of an embedded, private compartment that is informed by the nature of the tool in relation to the self. These lace-makers seemed to develop solidarity and admiration related to the process that they found themselves at a situated point within. The co-worker is also teacher; gestures are accurately guided from one body to the next, sharing and saving strength.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Calais specialised in bands of around 10 cm for luxury lingerie. For designers, makers and menders alike, the delicate motif acted as a pivot point around which personal

stories of the lace are read into, and reproduced.

In reconciling the bourgeois buyer with the toiling worker, lace became something other than consumable to Calaisiens, instead styled as geography, a river running through the town, a source of energy, a feature that narrativized labour relations, memories, emotions. This symbolic landscape was simultaneously fuelled by elements of the physical one: a Calaisien rite of passage was to find bullets in the dunes, empty the lead and use it to crimp an umbrella rib, forming the hook used in the threadwork of the tullist.

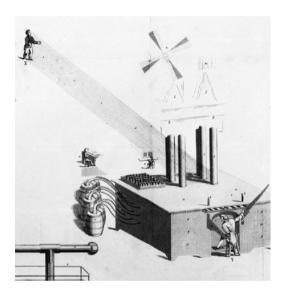
"A lifetime to do the same lace, does it not it lock in a serene routine?" one Calaisien reflects on working alongside his father.

from Noel Jouenne, 'Force et fragilite de l'industrie dentelliere,' in Et la dentelle ? L'industrie d'une ville : Calais

lace community,

programme<sub>d</sub>

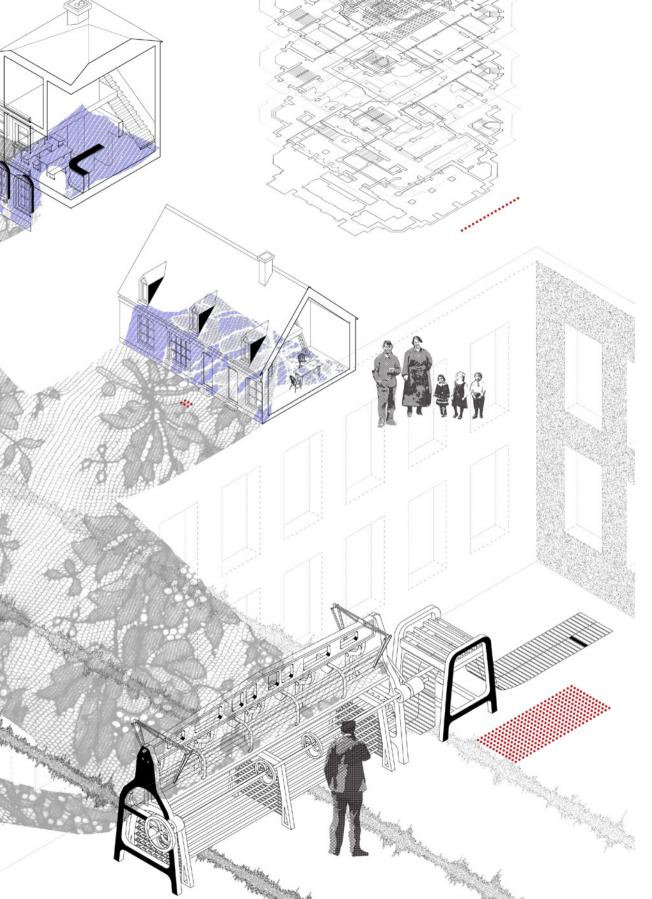
[interpretation]



 $\frac{\text{biopower}}{\text{techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies}}$ and the control of population.

<u>noopolitik</u> \_

cognitive control techniques exercised on multiple brains operating in unwitting collaboration.

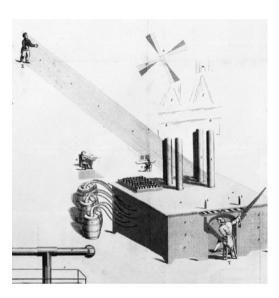


2.2.

### lace community,

#### programmed

[interpretation]



The body has been the focus of industrial-era control analysis. Especially influential was the Foucauldian concept of biopower, a *political anatomy* in which the disciplinary gaze of the employer assesses and subjugates the working body's potential for production and deviance.

Yet the brain also susceptable to control techniques. The above drawing titled 'Air Loom,' illustrates the delusions of Napoleonicera peace activist James Tilly Matthews who

believed a that a terrifying machine was brainwashing politicians and plunging Europe into revolution, terror, and war. Programming occurred via mesmeric rays and mysterious gasses controlled by odd machines and magnetic spies, all strangely embedded into a well-informed account Napoleonic War politics.

In my drawing opposite I consider the Leavers lace machine as producing a materiality that both cloaks and invades the interior spaces of lace-era Calais, both obscuring the private and advertising what is in-common. When lace-making left domestic space for the industrial, the home became site of vocational transmission. This fluid compartmentalisation of home and work evokes a psycho-city whose divisions are cut from liminal lace.

I imagine the community as subject to a laceprogramming. Just as the lace is coded by a system of punched cards, the inhabitants of the city of lace are coded by the specific physical, aural, tactile, economic and symbolic properties of the fabric. Overall, lace programming inscribed a common way of thinking and acting, forming a kind of collective interior, an intimacy that would actually benefit burgeoning social and political solidarities.

Leavers machine programming the city fabric. private lives are delimited by liminal lace, blurry work-life border that contributed to a collective interior.





2.3. anarchy and old lace

#### [clues]

During the first century of production laceworkers mobilised around various issues. The Nottingham lace migrants brought with them a political approach of Owenism, and a pinch of revolutionary fever leftover from the Luddites. They stood in solidarity with the French by founding soup kitchens, as well as Oddfellow and mutual aid societies that provided benefits during periods of illness or injury.

Even before unions were legalised in 1884, workers from different workshops began meeting in cafés, furnished and functioning somewhat within the domestic domain. Workers could engage in fraternal rituals of sharing food, drink and stories, as well as ideology and strategy.

After the turn of the century these co-operative cabarets expanded to functions including publication offices, boulangerie, butcher, grocer cinema, meeting rooms, brewery. During this time, anarcho-syndicalism was the dominant philosophy of the lace-workers' movement,

also known as worker's council democracy. This theory of anarchism views industrial syndicalism as a method for workers in capitalist society to gain control of an economy, fostering egalitarian values and production centred on meeting human needs. Solidarity, direct action, and direct democracy are both ends and means, building the new society from within the old.

France's Bourse du Travail (Labour Congress) movement was a manifestation of this philosophy; Calais finally built its own Bourse in 1937, spatially unifying dispersed meeting places into one site of assembly. This structure, with its mighty Peace & Work frontispiece and grand red auditorium, was designed to host both formal meetings and be a centre of working-class culture, incorporating lending libraries, class-rooms, performances and community celebrations. Its imperial staircase is clad in the same dark brick as the external skin, evoking the autonomy of Saint-Pierre's streets below.

<u>federalism</u> \_ the distribution of power in an organization (e.g. a government) between a central authority and constituent units.

<u>direct democracy</u> in which people decide on policy initiatives directly as opposed to representative democracy.



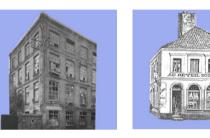
above: timeline of revolutionary syndicalism, below: relief with industry symbols in Calais' Bourse du Travail



# lace archive

[approach]

factories







leisure











workers

movement

- factories: showrooms and offices on ground floor, Leavers machine compartments on first floor, dyeing and drying in attics, roads of lace laid out.
- \_ factory tourelle turret for circulation and surveillance \_ co-op / assembly rooms: from houses to monuments
- \_ cottages with gendarme's hat dormer windows
- \_ lace boss townhouse with stone facing, lace details \_Calais' monumental art-deco Bourse du Travail
- \_ Alhambra cinema in neo-moorish style, cinema as access to 'other,' and world outside of the lace city

The archive is a device that enables the project to later carry elements of the old lace community into the architecture of a new community. The archive has three sections.

In the first exists an array of corporeal and cognitive experiences of the lace industry, from notions of tactility, materiality, time and rhythm of tool use to the relational conception of lace as story, the creative process, shared community symbol, lace as marking or merging boundaries between the domestic, the workplace, civil society.

The second compartment is full of the brick-

and-mortar anatomy of the lace community, still present throughout the city in the form of lace-workers' cottages, town-houses, factories, old club buildings, union offices. These are dissected to an architectural vocabulary of turrets, walkways, compartments, portals, piers, pediments, etc.

The third compartment is filled with the ideas and instruments of the anarcho-syndicalist lace-workers including mutual aid mechanisms, strike action, co-operative economics, coeducation, union circulars, as well as common spaces for sharing culture and celebration.





"You know what's the most difficult thing in this city, Monsieur Carrère? It's the inertia of things. ... Everything's solidified: the yuppies in their bubbles, the dimwits in their high-rises, the politicians in their politicking, the barbed-wire professionals along the beltway and the near Tunnel. I think I'm getting depressed here, Monsieur Carrère."

from Emmanuel Carrère, "Letter to a Woman of Calais," in 97,196 Words: Essavs. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

# Saint-Pierre-lès-Calais

In present day Calais we get the impression of a conflicted city. In certain areas, the intent to beautify and organise are evident, while others are left to ruin. Compared to the contagious prosperity of the lace community, this is a city whose successes no longer circulate. Here, people are travelling at very different speeds, some capitalising on the highly mobile consumer, while those seeking better lives meet immobilisation via high-tech corporate border security.

The built enviornment suggests a modern era of various traumas, and a struggle to compensate and recover. The North of the city is characterised by bland apartment blocks and the lights and lanes of the port stretching out behind the 5m high border fence mesh. The old city of Calais is now a landscape of post-war utilitarianism, colonised by chain hotels and restaurants geared to arriving tourists. This project focuses on the lace-workers' district of Saint-Pierre, which we regard as the heartland of the Calaisien community.

The heyday of Saint-Pierre in the 1860s saw community buildings, including a washhouse, church and new town hall, erected around Place Crèvecoeur, opening up new zones of conversation and relation for the working classes. The 1885 municipal merger of Calais and Saint-Pierre, owing to success of lace, led to further public projects e.g. the grand theatre.

Today only three lace factories operate in the city, now multi-nationally owned, with a workforce of under 300. The industry can no longer compete with automated machinery and China's cheap labour; Calais has become wise to its subordinate position in a globalised world. In 2008, the municipality built a €28 million lace museum, consigning lace to history.

Saint-Pierre is pinned in by infrastructure, beyond which lies the disjointed sprawl of newer residential, industrial and educational zones. Beyond its commercialised arteries, its urban environment is relatively homogeneous, owing to the historic attachment of boss and worker housing to the dispersed factories. Levels of preservation and dereliction aren't localised, nor are the modern redevelopments that stand boastfully banal in this comparatively rich architectural context.

## 3.1. machine park

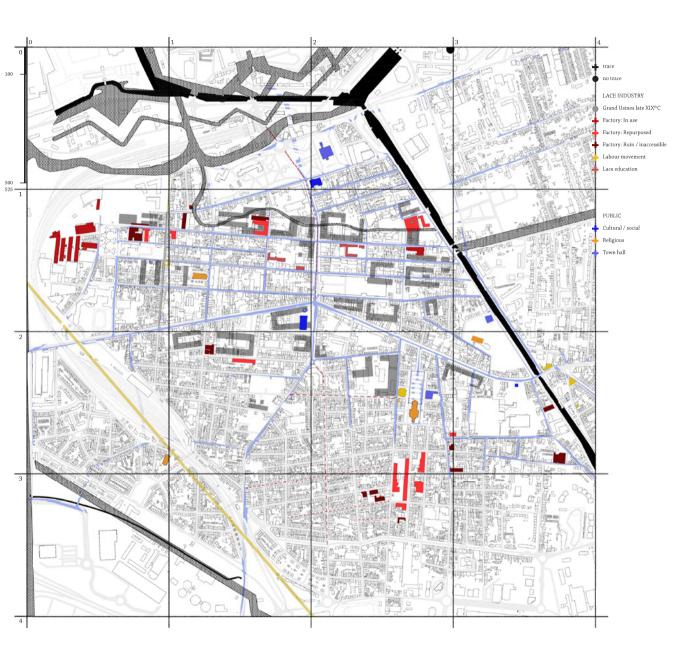
[context]

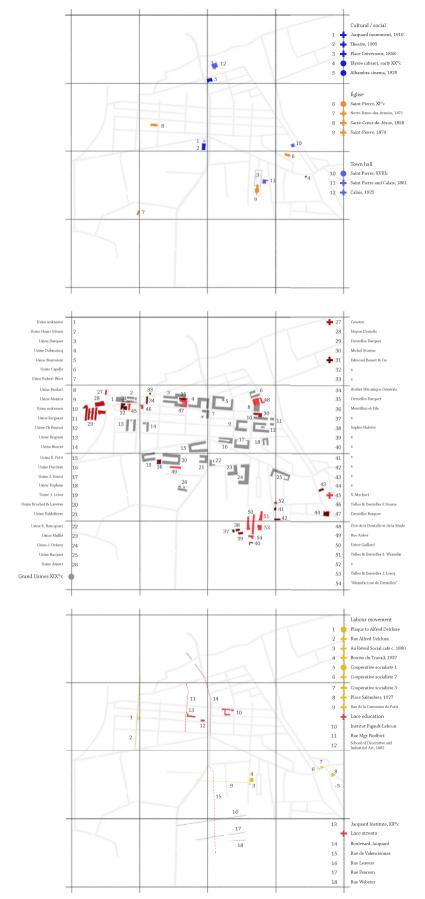
In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the introduction of steam power led to larger lace factories for more machines, and by the 1870s the industry of Saint-Pierre was divided into thirty-eight grand factories, of which no trace remains. Their U shape formed a courtyard from where the boiler room distributed power by pulley system.

The huge Leaver's lace machines provided a kind of spectacle that factory and city tectonics responded to. Spectacle features in the story of a child who is transfixed by the sound of the machines spinning on his walk to school, anxious to peer in on the work of his father. Or in the marks of a pattern drawing from the archives, inflected by the vibration of the factory floor, through the joists, down the walls, tabletop and through the pencil. The town is remembered as living to the rhythm of its looms, broadcasting the anthem of a laborious city. Brick skins shaking, the town is itself a machine park; the machine metonymically envelops the factory.

The association of workers with each other was in part due to the gathering mode of the factory, enabling a new sociality through which political leverage in bargaining power could be established. The root of this association was not singular, rather involving various processes of identification through labour, as well as shared narratives through singing or storytelling.

The mapping opposite shows some of the important industrial and community sites in the lace district over time. In Saint-Pierre, streets, monuments and buildings are named after lace pioneers, mechanics, union organisers and socialist politicians from the district. Its fishbone high-streets were once shaped by workers' leisure time and organising activities; I managed to pinpoint sites of several cabarets and cinemas though many more are referenced. To the NE a municipal and administrative area began to form, while the Bourse du Travail & Place Crèvecoeur, visible in quadrant 2-2, became a working class community hub.

















3.2. industrial ruins

site/s]

In Calais, the boarded-up or re-beautified factories that remain amid the graveyards of others form an eerie landscape. Tim Edensor writes on the importance of industrial ruins as cognitive bridges for the beliefs and values of those who used to inhabit them. Behind the gutted perimeters of many Calais lace factories, apartment complexes have been contrived. When these ruins are renovated by developers their social memory is commodified, externalised for new middle class protagonists.

At the edge of a brownfield plot on Rue des Quatre Coins, where a mass of factories,

workshops and houses were demolished some years ago, the red-brick and blue tiled façade of a 20<sup>th</sup> century lace factory has been propped up and overgrown. Just across the way, beginning to branch out into the wasteland, are the muted hues of a new 'eco village'.

This approach of facadism flattens the multilayered histories of factory life onto its enclosure. The disembowelling of these structures erases the real-life imprints of the bodies that once inhabited workstations, corridors, break-rooms, while retaining the emblem of the factory owner.



above: Rue Massena squat, below: abandoned factory on Rue des Quatre Coins



## 3.3. solidarity squats

[clues]

Calais Migrant Solidarity has documented a squatting movement that successfully used Calais' vacant factories to provide shelter and support to many displaced people over the last decade. Residing unnoticed for 48 hours, squatters with European ID established legal squats, triggering a lengthy juridical process before they could be evicted. Now outmanoeuvred by targeted legislation, the occupied buildings have been bulldozed, redeveloped, or their skins blocked up, awaiting death or renewed strategy.

But the stories of these squats are incredibly positive as stable shared spaces, as well as common projects of repair-work. This collaborative repair constituted an intimate knowledge of the interior nooks of various buildings, proving useful in eviction attempts. In one of the *Africa House* squats a hidden basement was fixed up for 40 people to hide during raids while police were none the wiser.

<u>solidarity</u> \_ an awareness of shared interests, objectives, standards, and sympathies; a sense of unity between different groups.

Solidarity squatters occupied an abandoned factory in extreme disrepair on Rue Massena and rebuilt the rotten floors, fixed holes in the roof and built a kitchen with running water, all within a fortnight. This squat evolved into a community hub, hosting bike repairs, language classes, meal sharing, etc.

The right-wing mayor of Calais has ensured the repression and destruction of these settlements. Squats on municipal land are quickly removed, and influence is exerted over other primary land-owners to assist with closures. Plans for redevelopment and construction of housing complexes in Calais has been used to pressure evictions of legal squats.

One issue we recognise in the solidarity squatting movement and the voluntourism genre of aid is the perceived dynamic of the virtuous outsider who arrives in Calais to perform the solidarity that the home community seems incapable of. We must find ways of curbing the Calaisien sense of incrimination and instead encourage and empower this community from within.









"[Fasanella] present[s] their interiors in such a way as to show that they were never interiors. Nothing has an interior. Everything is exteriority. The whole city, in this sense, is like an eviscerated animal... What makes the family kitchen no more than a cupboard off the street?"

from John Berger, 'Ralph Fasanella and the City' in About Looking

# opening up

In the bushes of the Rue des Quatre Coins brownfield plot, a youth den has been carved out, demarcated by a tangle of unspun vhs tape from the library, and furnished with sagging couch and dining chairs. Save for these blindspots, street-life is exceptionally quiet beyond the main roads, animated by cars and dog-walkers. Groups are huddled or en-route to a more private interior. There is an absence of kids out playing, of art or community gardens, of people hanging out or chatting to neighbours. The doors of the city are decidedly shut. It doesn't help that many schools and workplaces create pull forces to the perimeter of this central Saint-Pierre district.

Public buildings, like the library, now list rules of conduct that clearly target the presence of displaced peoples, creating a hostile atmosphere. It seems this atmosphere of policing public space has extended to how the home community use it too: inflexible, abiding, with their guard up.

The paintings on the left by Ralph Fasanella depict urban working life and political unrest in post-war America. Fasanella, self-taught in painting, was himself a second generation immigrant, machinist, and union organiser. Fasanella's unique cut-open and patchwork perspectives make the interior private suffering, exploitation, resilience and ambition of the city's inhabitants, public.

Stripped of the commonality of lace, Calais seems to have adopted the redundant built encasements that Fasanella cuts away in his paintings, the city's putative directive being to externalise, and to be careful not to spill. The most revealing discourse occurs in the form of graffiti, expressing unfiltered sentiments of alienation, protectionism, or migrant solidarity. Is it possible to move these voices from the facade, the enclosure, to the visceral and operative nooks of a new collective interior?



4. a new community

#### [objective]

This section outlines first what a new community for Calais could look like [4], the forces against it [4.1], then a realm capable of change [4.2], through a common repair project [4.3], that could encourage refusal of the conditions that the community currently operates under [4.4].

I propose to subvert the current trajectory of the Calaisien community through a shared city-wide project, a social investment that would hope to renew practices of solidarity. The project would aim to open the collective interior of what was once the lace community to admit new voices, such as those who join or pass through the city temporarily, establishing a community up from the terra it inhabits rather than linked by identity and the in-common.

This is a community based on shared experience, interactions between diverse peoples who are not linked by work, productivity or completion, but operates in fragmentation and interruption (here cyclic repair-work seems appropriate). This theoretical community was conceptualised by the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy under the inoperative community, which works by inward pulls rather boundaries, inviting in marginal groups such as migrants.

Creative resistance now emerges in a muchchanged context than that of the anarchosyndicalists. We note the shift of noopolitik (control through cognitive consumption of information) locally from the loom, lace and its psycho-landscape, to a collective interior programmed by the pervasive story of Calais as the victim of a migration crisis, disempowered and dominated by an external tragedy, and the subsequent militarisation and securitisation of its city. To challenge the internalisation of this story, endorsed by the state and sold by global media, alternative narratives are encouraged. A community that practices the imagining of alternative futures is kindled from within Calais' civil society by invoking the character of the radical raccommodeuse. Raccommodeuses undertook the final stage of repair-work in the lace industry. These women forensically studied the fabric, chalked mistakes, and meticulously re-made or mended motifs. Repair-work seeks to open up discourse on alternative political realities: instead of dreading what seems inevitable, the process of intervening into decay is one of imagining other futures, used as a creative rather than conservative act.

This draws on Do-It-Together as an emerging theme of community groups (e.g. repair cafes). We add radical to imagine repair as an anarchic practice of counter-conduct, against the capitalist doctrine of consumerism, and the blockading and commodification of industrial heritage buildings in Calais. The camaraderie of lace-work is rekindled, empathy built of a shared responsibility and the mutual toil of attending to disintegration. This interdependence through repair is advocated by various authors, including ecofeminist scholar Donna Haraway who wrote of its potential in restoring and caring for "corridors of connection" (in Ephemera 2019).

To some extent this project parallels the evolution of the lace community from working clandestinely in marginal spaces, to the growing and empowering of its population to lay out new visions, like the rise of Calais' own lace designers and schools, as well as their syndicalists. Repairwork is seen as a means of making a community that can be autonomous of capitalist enclosures and move in the direction of the common. In this radical turn towards a sharing community, Calais becomes critical to both its portrayal and its own role in relation to the border regime, and can begin to resist it as a collective unit.



Le Raccommodage

the radical raccommodeuse

## 4.1. an imposed role

[problematic]

Aiding migrants and refugees in the municipal area is seen by the town hall as enabling their undesirable presence. Anti-solidarity laws deterring aid have successfully pushed volunteer organisations outside the city and disengaged the home community from this imperative.

A relatively singular story for Calais is sold both in and outside the community. The city is described as subject to a migration crisis, causing issues for its long-term development as well as day to day life. Crucially, Calaisiens are mostly pictured as powerless and passive, even under threat by these lawless outsiders. Mostly this narrative endorses further control, sustaining the economy of filtering mobilities, and maintaining noopolitik influence over Calaisiens.

<u>neoliberalism</u> \_ policies of economic liberalization, including privatization, deregulation, free trade, austerit

The messages of popular media partially mirror and activate the deep-seated attitudes of its readers, but also deliver an accumulating drip feed of 'input' attitudes. Whether or not they fit it already, Calaisiens are prescribed a role of the frustrated subject, sustained by an underlying sense that *there is no alternative* to the current humanitarian situation, just as there is apparently no alternative to its neoliberal basis.

The dogmas laid down by mainstream media are subject to capital interests, including the state and corporations. Some theorists have argued that the state needs a borderline character (e.g. bandit, homo-sacer, migrant) to frame its sovereignty. The marginalisation, mistreatment, and maintenance of the displaced person on the fringes of society, included in its structure only by their excluded status, is seen by the powerful as a useful tool in unifying and controlling those on the inside.





#### 4.2.

## the realm of

#### consent

#### [problematic]

Alongside its imposed role in the migrant crisis, the current Calais community is also processing the decline of lace, unemployment, educational and vocational shifts, repercussions of a global capitalist order and popular reasons for once communist Calais to now side electorally with the patriots over the globalists.

On the flipside of the idea of an imposed role is the consent of the third sector, an element Gramsci considers essential to the rule of the state. If political society is realm of force and civil society, individuals and organisations independent of the government, is the realm of consent, it must also be the realm of refusal.

With aid illegalised in Calais, one form of refusal could be found in different ways to

share. There is potential in the co-operation of those who are faced with a sense of *no future*, be this economically, environmentally, legally or logistically rooted. In Calais this could be the youths, who are just on the inside of the community, and the displaced population who lie outside of it, groups already practiced in the task of imagining alternative futures.

In the parks and corners of Calais, an allyship seems to have developed between these groups, stemming from mutual contempt of police oppression. With lace-centric training institutions now redundant, a window of opportunity opens in constructing a new informational, educational scenario that can include all the terrestrials of Calais.

46

























#### 4.3.

#### re-using

[approach]

If you look closely at the net curtains in Calais, you will notice they are striped, comprising rows of Valencienne bands produced for lingerie. In this city of offcuts there is potential in re-using the existing built fabric. The challenge is to avoid glorifying lace heritage while recognising it as a language important to the existing community, and inspecting how it could be useful to our new solidarities movement. Here we employ the lace archive and engage in the deconstruction and reconstruction of its elements.

Repair is not simply about finding a permanent solution; living amongst ruins and brokenness can be seen as an experience where social violence makes itself known, and reveals what is not working. In this way, repair includes seeking disintegration in order to maintain the discourse of what is going wrong, a practice Argyropoulou & Vourloumis label "repeating brokenness in our refusal to get with the program" (Ephemera 2019).

Repair-work first engages in materialist politics through advocacy of the common, against private property, and against the corporate expansion into the afterlife of products through patenting or preventing their fixability. Repair also fosters new modes of sociality that challenge the centrality of work. Instead of

putting lace heritage buildings in the hands of developers for profit, the labour of repair and maintenance could be de-alienated and put into the hands of the terrestrial-citizen.



Though this repair task is appealing in its recreational and social aspect, we must also strive for its political realisation. The value of strengthening community ties is in the capacity for greater social justice, more democratic and accountable dynamics, and a mutuality that furthers autonomy from dominant institutions such as the market and the state. These aspirations necessitate a degree of reflexive review within and of the community, which is where the context of education becomes particularly useful.













<u>autonomy</u> \_ the quality or state of being selfgoverning / self-directing freedom and especially moral ndependence.

## 4.4. re-*fusing*, refusing

[objective]

The anarchist approach lives on; in the present moment large populations around the world are exercising ongoing refusal. One political future imagined as fruition of the radical raccommodeuse movement is an autonomous Calais, a 'city on strike.' The ingredients for this community, stronger solidarities and selfgoverning capacity, should begin to emerge from the shared repair project. Autonomous Calais is somewhat a translation of the philosophy of Calaisien anarchists a century earlier but to an era when the old workers' syndicats are more concerned with preserving existing conditions than promoting radical change.

Instead, as the social strike gains precedence, the community becomes a vocal unit with bargaining power, in Calais platformed by its position at an important and visible checkpoint in the enclosure of fortress Europe. Autonomous Calais would be a move towards federalism as a broader system change, similar to radical municipalism where regions use social solidarity and expansion of the commons, collectively managed resources, to oppose control by state or market forces.

Calais cannot be moved and therefore will continue to attract those who desire to cross the channel. Thus the consensus of the city itself wields some great sway over European border politics. This new community of individuals occupying the same terra could be capable of attempting to refuse its role in filtering peoples, denouncing the militarised border regime and actively and collectively disregarding the various legal limitations put on interactions between the different groups who exist there.

"[inoperativeness is] a generic mode of potentiality that is not exhausted... community becomes an open project... It is the actualization of this potentiality that the rioting pariah seeks to undertake... One must, therefore, think of a strategy that provides suburban youngsters with the theoretical and political means needed to develop a clear vision of their aspirations (the conviction being that beyond its apparent nihilism, rioting could, in the long term, trigger the emergence of a first-rank political actor)."



# 1.2.3.4.5.6.7



example of anarchitect Matta-Clark's building cuts



international squatters' symbol and text *no-one is illegal* in French

# 5. seeds of dissidence

[objective]

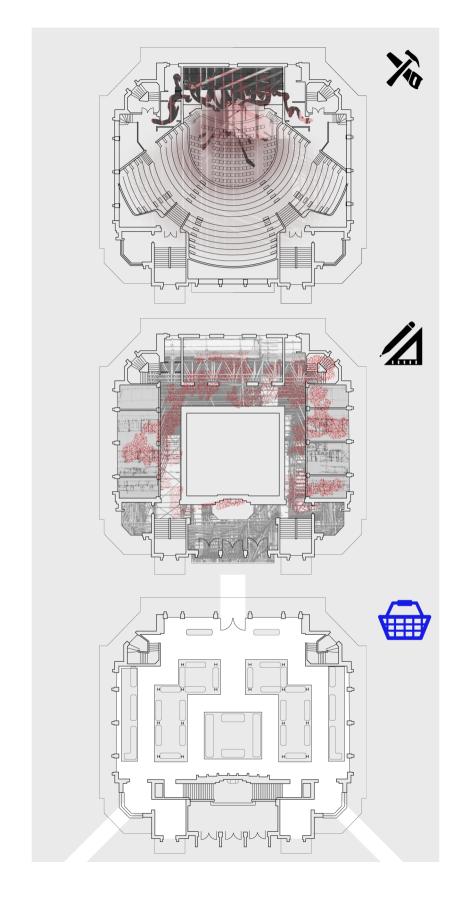
This section explores possible approaches at the beginning of the radical repair movement. Seeds of dissidence can already be found throughout Calais, though they are regularly cleared up or painted over. Some inhabit the blindspots that already exist, like the vhs tape den. Others are evident through the signification and visual traces used to claim or question territory.

On the one hand the dissidence of the privileged serves to highlight the struggle of the displaced population to create suitable and stable shelter. On the other hand, internal Calaisien dissidence could open up accessible and unintimidating sites for the gathering of different groups without it being seen as a facilitating aid mission and shut down by authorities.

This actually autonomous, rebellious space-making could be conveyed to the town hall as a project of repair led by the home community in order to care for their damaged city. Polarisation on the migrant issue has led to a somewhat fragmented civil society in which non-conformist groups may now experience a

sense of squatting in their own city. The neutral entry point of a movement to repair broadens opportunity and motivation to congregate and cultivate community ambition. However tame the beginnings of the movements, the key is showing up. To regularly exist in spaces subject to risk and uncertainty is already dissident in its effective recognition that different worlds already exist and can be speculatively produced with others.

But what should these spaces look like? Does an anarchist architecture exist? The anarchitects of the 1970s condemned architecture as a hard shell that limits progress, reinforcing the current dogma, a kind of noopolitical influence in itself. The apparent contradiction of a programmatic art serving an ideology that rejects the program is difficult to resolve. We first recognise that an anarchist architecture must thus be malleable, tested and changing in response to its use, responsive not to the market or the state, but the affect and intelligence of the people.





[approach] [site]



One approach for a phase 1 of initiating dissidence could be to use the Bourse du Travail, mostly vacant with the occasional meeting and the Saturday market on the ground floor. This monumental structure, relatively unsurveilled, could be a strategic site to occupy. Rather than the workers who once assembled here regularly, resistance can now be exerted by the civitas or body of terrestrials, a political group predicated on co-existing in a place. The community raccommodeuse movement thus squats in the antecedent of anarcho-syndicalism. French

syndicats cannot now be seen as revolutionary, they are rather forces to preserve; our radical movement lies outside the current remit of the Bourse, not necessarily welcome, and therefore a dissident presence. The mentality of squatting has value in itself too, igniting occupation, care-taking, co-homing. It may be that the movement is invited in, nevertheless the formal environment of the Bourse is regarded as a kind of tabula rasa.

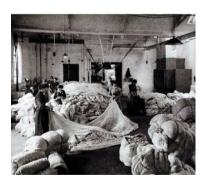
The movement would use the Bourse partially in accordance with its educational, organising and planning functions, as a venue to gather and discuss potential sites and approaches of repairwork. On the other hand, the 'interior streets' of the Bourse are perfect for prototyping, in miniature, creative repair projects towards the Irelbuilding of cabarets in the streets of Saint-Pierre below. The more cavernous spaces of the building, including the auditorium and atrium are re-populated with a function of (anarchic) 1:1 repair and model workshop, preparing to venture into the field.

# +









lace architecture demolitions, remains and innards, elements for salvage, the soft space of intermediate storage of lace bundles between production and repair.

## 5.2. radical repair-work

[approach]

Phase 2 of dissidence unfolds out in the field, creating architecture through the repair of Saint-Pierre. This process could begin with the community flagging sites with potential, claiming and provoking situated visions by labelling *under development*, posting 'planning documents' and putting up visualisations. This begins to open conversation to others in the area.

From here forms of site-dependent intervention develop either through re-creating from ruins or rubble, or engaging the archive to physically or conceptually re-use elements from lace architectures. This could be features of engagement, like the balcony or arch, or exchange, like the co-op counter or bookshelf.

The physical experience of repairing relates to earlier readings of the body and tool in the lace industry, from the mimetic sharing of strength through mentorship, to the healthy autonomy of the tool creating a personal time and station within a highly interconnected process. A shared exertion and co-supportive environment would begin to strengthen solidarity between groups.

The object of radical repair-work would not be limited to the built fabric, but also include whatever needed fixing in the group, clothes, gadgets, furniture. In this way, the function of the new cabarets that the repair works towards emerges at first in the form of 'repair shop'. The intimate translation of objects and devices from private lives to the collective endeavour of mending sparks a conversation in which a collective interior can open up and grow.

Architectural qualities could engage with the tectonics and interactions of repair, from the flexibility of fabrics, the geometries of carpentry, to logics of buttons and gestures in gadgets.







TERRESTRIAL CONGRESS





















RESOLUTION PLUMBING old lace factory: J. Leroy

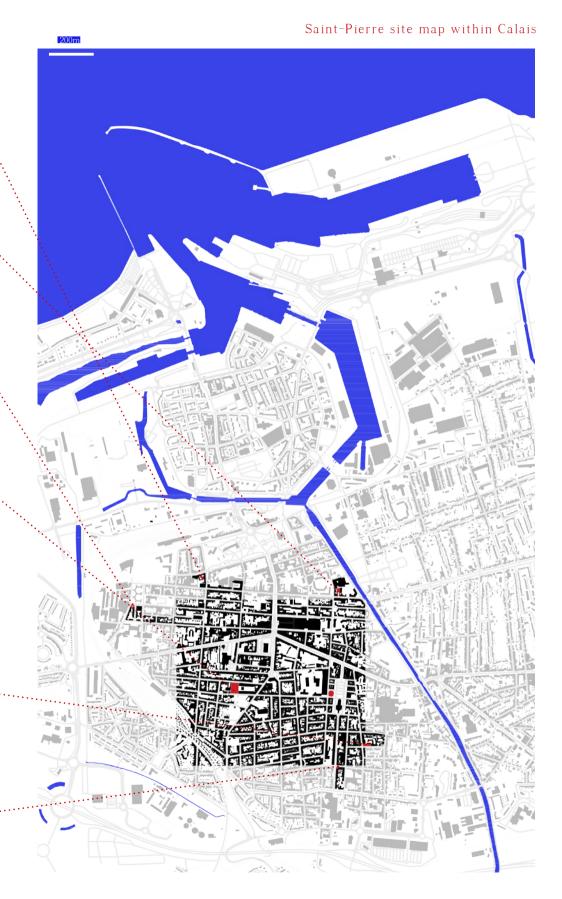












"SELFWARE.surface" student studio with Peter Fattinger, Michael Rieper and the Vienna University of Technology, 2003.

a temporary interface which can be used and lived in is being created between the interior and exterior.





still from "Koolhaas Houselife," 2008, directed by Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine.

a humorous study of daily chores of Guadalupe Acedo, the housekeeper, and the other people who look after this 'masterpiece' of contemporary architecture.

# 6. cooperative architectures

[approach]

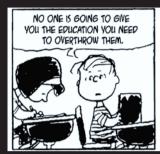
This section seeks to lay out some of the architectural ambitions and conditions of the project. The movement outlined up until now delegates much of its development to the autonomy of its actors, firstly the youths, activists and volunteers, displaced or unemployed people, and later wider participants of civil society.

However, I now engage the meta element of this outline which is the fictional position of the architect within the movement. This enables a creative process to be outlined and the production of a potential blueprint for the trajectory of repair—work and the development of the classrooms and cabarets that sustain the movement.

Some architectural concepts include:

- 'opening up' lace heritage sites to various users and encouraging participation through accessibility, intrigue, narrative navigational design (memory markers like landmarks, elements with stories/names).

- 'opening up' the perimeter: building from inside-out e.g. using the archive of exterior features (windows, doorways, balconies) in the interior and the archive of interior features (partitions, hard and soft furnishings, ornaments) as invitations on the exterior.
- using the lace precedent of symbols and insignias on factories and co-ops to employ flexible/mobile architectural ornamentation and mural as part of 'imagining futures' praxis.
- [re]building spaces that both require regular maintenance and are designed to make said maintenance collaborative and enjoyable (a challenge!)
- cross-programming serious civic functions (congress, council) with free and creative functions (classrooms, repair-shop, performance).



Linus and Marcie from Peanuts



STORYTELLING INTERSECTION
\_old factory site: Etablissements A. Fournier



SOLIDARITY PRESS



RESOLUTION PLUMBING old lace factory: DORAL YSE



[proposition]

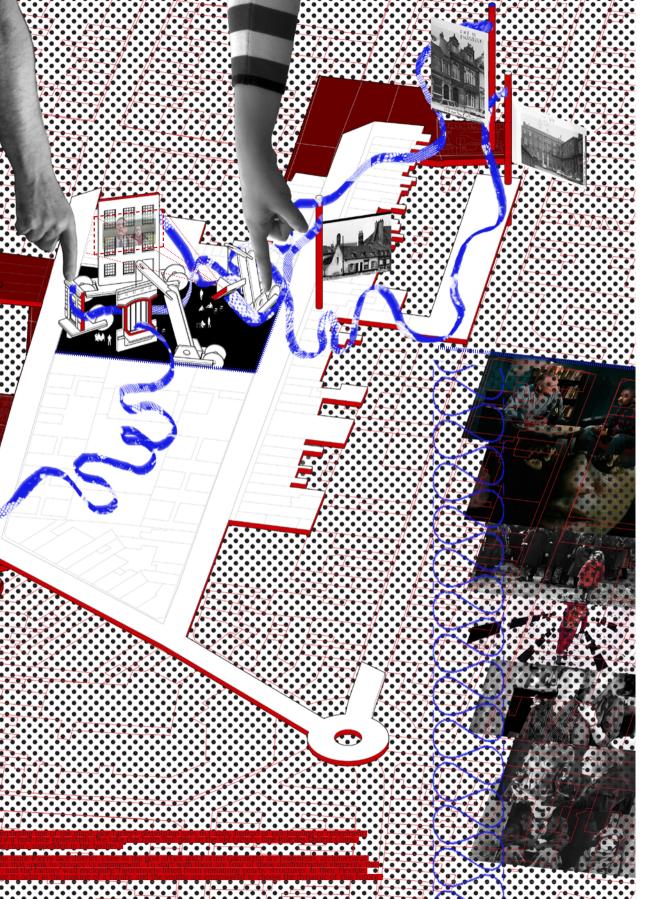
Phase 1 of inhabiting repair architectures is through the typology of the classroom, a classification to act as catalyst for architecture. The idea of re-education is a vehicle to help this community realise its potential for refusal and self-governance.

This re-education covers both the skill-sharing of the repair workshops, as well as knowledge sourcing and sharing of resistance and protest strategies, and learning from examples of other autonomous cities and self-governing communities. Repair is the just the beginning of full community custodianship of the city.

The classroom should accommodate repair practices, skill sharing, and discussion and planning groups. In-between the material

education and the political theory, is the classroom for imagination. In this sense, reeducating involves the self-directed experience of media (as opposed to the prescriptions of popular and accessible media), for example the co-consumption of film / music / literature in order to consider other realities and illicit discussion on how Calais could construct a new future beyond the neoliberal dogmas, and the enforced border regime.

The classroom inhabits the creative re-patching of the factory old buildings. Architecture of the domestic is positioned into the nooks of this industrial exterior, inviting shared experience through a materiality belonging to the realm of social intimacy.



6.2.

contingent

cabarets

[proposition] [site/s]

Phase 2 of inhabiting repair architectures is the formation of 'contingent cabarets,' buildings that are respond to the organic development of the movement (contingent) and correspond to similar functions as the lace-workers' cabarets.

The cabarets build on the visions and learnings of the classrooms. In Calais, we imagine a confederation of cabarets, styled for the continuous repair-work of the raccommodeuse, that serve as houses for the people, combining functions of co-education (classrooms, cinema, library) and community decision-making (congress, meeting rooms, archives, publishing).

The sites of these cabarets are already domestic, growing out of lace workers' cottages and bosses town-houses that have been left derelict. The repair-work that happens here is attentive to shapes and dynamics of egalitarian assembly; at first casual, co-kitchens or lounges, they grow into publication studios, congress, while retaining their character as houses of the people.



ERRESTRIAL CONGRESS

CONTINGENT CINEMA razed lace factory plot

a contingent cinema: a cabaret starts to take shape from use of an old factory site as an open-air cinema

One co-educational scenario draws from the precedence of film and performance in the historic lace-workers' movement, where cinemas began to be incorporated into their union cabarets. Today going to the cinema, rather than streaming or donning VR goggles, involves unusual sharing of time-space with indiscriminate others, which is what the repair movement seeks to motivate.

A few examples of contingent cabaret cross programming could be:

- 1. shoe repair shop | micro theatre | archive
- 2. cinema | congress | salvage school
- 3. publishing house | care commons | lending room

Of various possible scenarios, this project will at first test several, then pick one to produce a sited and detailed proposal for. The idea is that the confederation of cabarets would be interdependent, so the development of one would be a snapshot of a broader picture.



ATEWAY THEATRE





# /. imagining futures

[method

Imagining futures has already been discussed as an intended praxis for the repair community in its continuous learning and reaching for alternatives. Static targets such as the Sustainable Development goals can be problematic; committing to these goals is to conserve one view of the future (deemed at the time as a good future) until it is achieved, which can disincentivise receptivity and awareness. Further, these goals are both useful and unclear in being global and generic. Communities should also be encouraged and equipped to realise goals for themselves, derived from their own issues

and environments. In undergoing this process directly, they are a step closer to recognising related issues in other communities and being able to establish broader geo-solidarities from the unit of city, laterally.

This section deals with the funny task of imagining a future for this project while still grasping its tangibility and taming its ambitions. This document hopefully gives an indication of direction, but does not necessarily wish to commit to a straightforward course of action, rather remaining open to new forces, information and inspirations.







[method] - an outline subject to evolution

#### the formal submission:

- situation-plan
- plans 1:100, 1:500
- sections and façades 1:100 (bodies:building), 1:50 (building tectonic), 1:10 (body:building)
- axonometrics
- models 1:100 and urban scale

#### method

Exploratory methodologies include modes of patchwork/collage using text and image, the use of the architectural lace archive and historical precedent, as well as thinking through modelmaking. Investigative approaches include possible correspondence and discourse with youth and civil society groups in Calais to better understand their direction and obstacles, as well as the continued reading of theoretical work surround the problematic and my architectural angle. Reflective practices are also important, from the co-evolutionary mode of writing alongside designing, to communicating methods in themselves, for example using forms of fold, overlay, palimpsest to express the importance of lineage and antecedent in the project.

#### output

- a series of abstract sketch models to elaborate theoretical readings of the architecture
- studies of genres of physical repair-work that could populate a repair movement, and

the relation of each craft to body, room and community e.g. building, textiles, electronics

- study and incorporation of co-educational civil society precedents, informing the programme and architectural approach.
- a series of written status-updates following three stages of projectwork.
- possibly two booklets, both fictionally located within the project's imaginary. One visual booklet pertaining to the project of repair-work, documenting design propositions from the semester as a handbook for the movement. The other booklet would be textual, a critical and theoretical companion, perhaps consisting of a series of short writings on film, performance, literature and the discussions and realisations they potentialize if consumed collectively in one of the Calais cabarets.

#### reflexivity, chaos & care

A parting note on authorial style. Reflexivity means an act of self-reference - my interpretations and approach inform the perspective from which I make my next move. This can make the project seem dense and unclear at times, perhaps even oblivious to the forces outside this feedback loop. For me, this way of working enables an important creative impulse - as much as I will focus on editing and communicating the core ideas of this project - I will also invest care in interesting avenues of association if they may reveal themselves.

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### image credits

- 2.2 'Air Loom by James Tilly Matthews,' Public Domain Review online. •
- 2.3 The staff of the company Henon, Magali Domain, Syndicalisme et socialisme.
- 2.4 \_ 'Cooperative Socialiste,' Magali Domain, 'Syndicalisme et socialisme.' Lace-worker's cottage at Lacemakers of Calais online, www.lacemakersofcalais.com.au/lace-towns-france • Alhambra cinema at Calais Avant-hier blog www.calais-avant-hier.eklablog.com • 'CALAIS, BOURSE DU TRAVAIL,' at www.collection-jfm. fr/t/cartes-postales-anciennes/france/62-pas-de-calais • [varjous untitled] from Cité de la Dentelle et de la Mode lace
- **3.3** Former squat in Rue Massena, Calais Migrant Solidarity, 'Trapped on the Border: A Brief History of Solidarity Squatting Practices in Calais.' •
- 3.4 \_ 'Dress Shop by Ralph Fasanella, 1972, oil on canvas, 45 by 92 at http://collections.fenimoreartmuseum. org/dress-shop. • Working at the Mill by Ralph Fasanella, 1977, oil on canvas, 50 by 96 at http://www.artnet.com/ artists/ralph-fasanella/mill-workers-lower-pacific-mill-working-at-the-xSCC2b71GLBvusG0sYYUQQ2 •
- 4. \_ Raccommodeuses at Calais Avant-hier blog, www.calais-avant-hier.eklablog.com •
- 4.3 \_ a 'Stub' visibly mended skirt c. 1870, Nordiska Museet instagram, www.instagram.com/p/BqtniPTAj5F • [various untitled] from Cité de la Dentelle et de la Mode lace library. • Boites vitrées, in 'L'usine Peeters et Perrin: Souvenirs de Jean Peeters, Philippe Cassez of Amis du Vieux Calais. • Workers drinking at Calais Avant-hier blog • Kiosk at Calais Avant-hier blog | A Fournier shop at Calais Avant-hier blog • 'France - Grocery,' by Roger-Viollet, at www.roger-viollet.fr/en/s-1098720-french-of-the-1950s •
- 4.4 \_ 'Supporters of Extinction Rebellion march in London,' by Kevin J. Frost at www.theconversation.com/asconservation-scientists-we-are-compelled-to-rebel-against-extinction-and-researchers-across-the-world-should-ioinus-124548 • 'Protesters make barricades at Hong Kong airport,' at www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-49380531 • 'Demonstrators gather on a street in Santiago during anti-government protests,' by Alberto Vald at www.rte.ie/ brainstorm/2019/1119/1092831-whats-behind-the-massive-protests-in-chile • Lebanon protesters, by F. Abdullah at www.dw.com/en/opinion-lebanon-needs-more-than-just-protests-and-outrage/a-50923755 • Occupation du Nespresso Opéra par les gilets noirs, at www.infolibertaire.net/occupation-du-nespresso-opera-par-les-gilets-noirsimmigre-e-s-sans-papiers-habitant-es-des-foyers-locataires-de-la-rue-et-des-militant-es-de-la-cnt-so • Gilet Jaunes, at www.versobooks.com/blogs/4242-understanding-the-gilets-jaunes •
- 5. Building Cuts by Gordon Matta Clark, at White Hot Magazine online, www.whitehotmagazine.com/ articles/2007-gordon-matta-clark-moca/926 •
- **5.2** 'Inspector,' at Lacemakers of Calais online, www.lacemakersofcalais.com.au/workers-and-work Factory demolition in 'L'usine Peeters et Perrin,' Amis du Vieux Calais. •
- 6. 'SELFWARE.surface' by Peter Fattinger and Michael Rieper, at http://www.mvd.org/en/prj/surface still from 'Koolhaas Houselife,' by Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine, screengrab from https://vimeo.com/272727945 •
- 6.1 Linus and Marcie from Peanut featured in uncredited meme, at https://sites.google.com/site/barrykort/ home/blog-posts-on-rules-systems-and-cybernetics •





#### education

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, Copenhagen, Denmark

MA Political Architecture: Critical Sustainability (2018 - present)

The University of Edinburgh Edinburgh, UK

BA Architecture with *Distinction* (2015 - 2018)

#### accolades

Andy MacMillan Drawing Award best drawings in BA and MArch (2018) The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland

J.R. McKay Silver Medal best undergraduate final project (2018) Edinburgh Architectural Association

Helen A. Rose Prize best graduating BA student (2018) Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Best 3rd Year Student commendation (2018) Architecture & Design Scotland

#### professional experience

Architectural trainee at Asante Arkitekter (01 - 06/2019) Stockholm, Sweden

Freelance architectural assistant (06 - 09/2018) Cumbria, UK

