Learning from Real Utopias

Interrelating Circular Practices, Placemaking, And Coproduction Toward a Circular Built Environment

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Important note
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RAPS Conference 2022
11–12 November
Eindhoven

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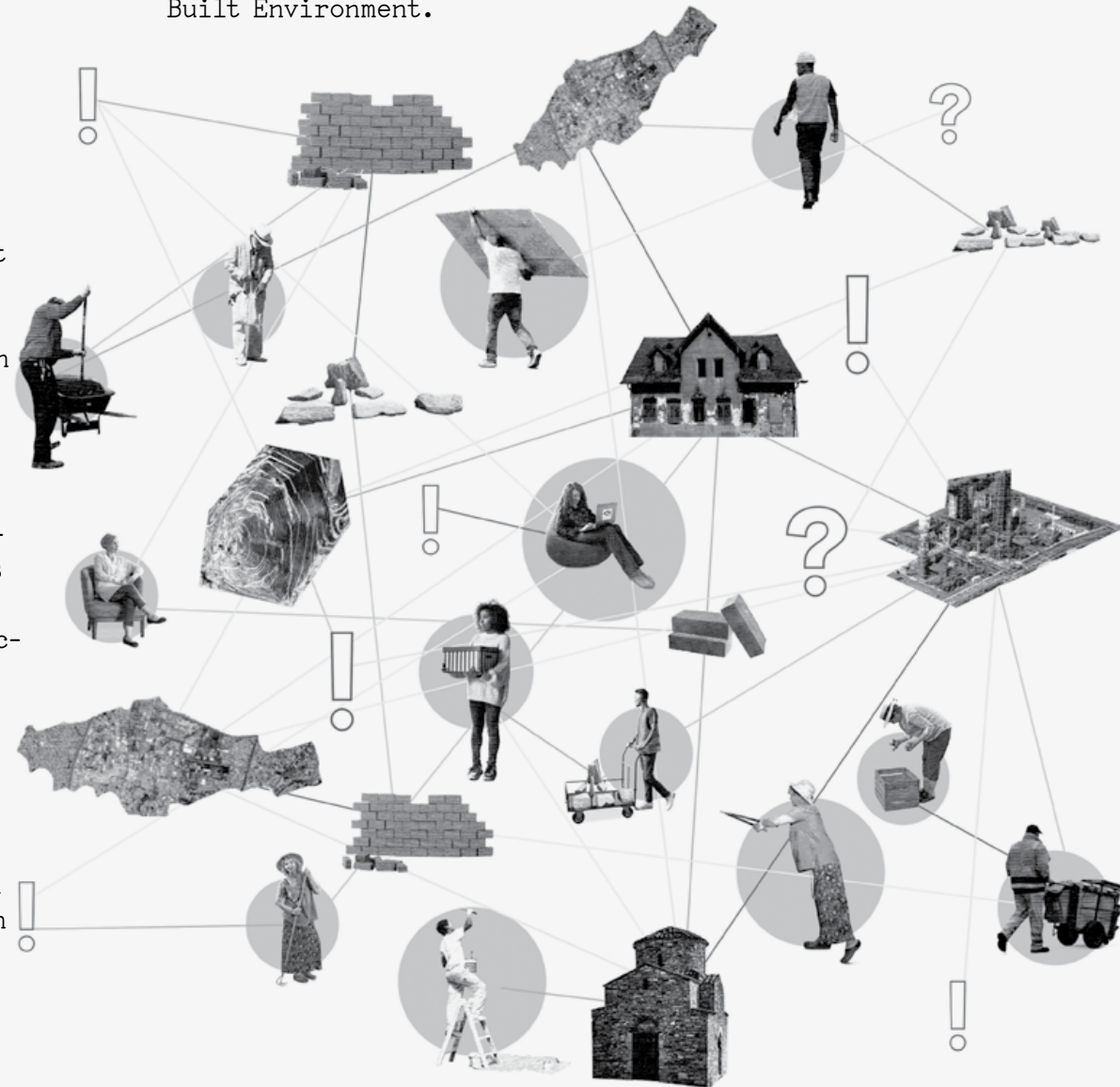## INTERRELATING CIRCULAR PRACTICES, PLACEMAKING, AND COPRODUCTION TOWARD A CIRCULAR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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In Circular Built Environment (CBE), humans engage in diverse practices to close resource loops at different spatial-temporal levels. These activities are based on care for other humans, materials, and environments throughout lifecycles. The CBE is still a desired future. However, evidence of small-scale initiatives that point toward a circular future can be found worldwide. Such real utopias are happening on the margins of the present-day linear mainstream but are based on utopian visions of alternative futures.

This work identifies case studies that entangle three kinds of human practices toward a CBE. Circular practices are diverse human activities that support slowing, closing, and narrowing resource loops. Placemaking is a collaborative practice to transform spaces of possibilities into places by filling them with diverse activities, narratives, and identities. Co-production are collaborative processes combining diverse human knowledges and skills toward common goals. Frameworks are needed to study cases of real utopias. First, to empower them as subjects of politics, research, and activism. Second to learn from them and inspire other initiatives around the world. The question becomes, what can be learned from real utopias on how circular practices, placemaking, and co-production can be interrelated to enable human agency to transition toward a CBE?

First, this article develops a framework of hypotheses on the interrelation of the three practices from a literature review. In the second step, the framework is tested with one pilot case study. Therefore, fieldwork was conducted in 'Haus der Materialsierung' in Berlin. Finally, the article concludes with recommendations for selecting global cases of 'real utopias' to apply the framework further. Researching and communicating about real utopias can empower small-scale practices to gain snowballing momentum and significantly contribute to transitioning toward a Circular Built Environment.

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