The Terminal: Marseille beyond the headlines.
The Terminal: Marseille beyond the headlines.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Information and Drawing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References/Precedent Studies</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marseille’s status as a destination has always been entangled with its duplicitous nature as a city at the end of the line - either a dead end or a point of departure. The project, The Terminal, began with the rational line of a planned, but not yet publicized, tram extension into Marseille’s disorderly and marginalized Quartiers Nord. What should be an infrastructure of access between people and opportunity is bound up in all the contradictions of a territory. Through the line I began to reread a city which I, like most, otherwise knew through a series of overlapping cliches. A city of of slow indulgence: sunshine, beaches, women, and alcohol. Of daily sweat: industry, immigration, trade, and poverty. And of fast deals: of drugs, prostitution, gangs, and corruption. Part fact and part fiction, these parallel reputations of a good and a bad life are constant references of the limits of individual autonomy within the unstable relations that make the city. As an outsider in a city known as a place of passage for outsiders, I came in search of the Marseille beyond the headlines.

While all cities are shaped by circuitous conflicts of profit, image and power, Marseille is one of particularly exacerbated difference, both positive and negative. Rather than looking for a resolution, this project reinterprets the brief. It takes the form of a newspaper because a newspaper and Marseille are synonymous: as in the city, friction is created by colliding unresolved narratives, both fact and fiction, within the physical space of a page. The Terminal is set in the future of Friday, August 19, 2022, a projection of the present and inevitably also an excavation of the past. Through a publicly accessible medium, the newspaper merges the possible realities and fictions of an arbitrary day (because news happens everyday) in the life of Marseille. With every article, it exposes the debates surrounding the tram line, speculates on their evolution, and projects new realities that the line may confront and construct along its length.

A newspaper reinterprets the brief for an urban project, subverting the conception of such a project as the solution to a linear problem. Design speculations are documented as current events, settings for already existing realities. Or they are caricatured scenarios, acknowledging irony and critical commentary. Or they are proposals which collapse past and future into a synthetic present. In its totality, The Terminal does not propose a singular representation of a territory. Rather it conceives of the newspaper as a territory, itself a temporal construct, produced by multiple potential narratives which are multiple in their representation. Thus, while a finite and curated product, the newspaper operates as an everyday infrastructure for the instability of the city.

Having started with the line of the tram on a map, The Terminal (re)constructs of that map. Like any analytical map, it makes no claim to pure objectivity for the selection of facts inevitably creates a subjective reality. The immediacy of the journalistic medium foregrounds physical space as that which produces broader political, economic and cultural geographies rather than architecture as buildings which emerge from abstract maps. As architecture becomes increasingly detached from material reality, mediated by globally commodified representations, the project argues for the specificity to be found in the relationship between architecture and geography. Masquerading as a newspaper, The Terminal is a critical cartography, both descriptive and projective.

If Marseille’s parallel reputations for a good and bad life are contingent upon the contradiction that the individual can only maintain autonomy through constant exchange with the city, then the newspaper embodies this exchange. It tells both exceptional and banal stories from near and far, but those stories never exist in isolation, always in a non-linear relation. Reading it is an act of solitary routine and yet one which explicitly relates us to others and to a world beyond our physical space. In the end, no narrative is autonomous in the newspaper, just as no individual is in the city.
Cours Belsunce

Place Cazemajou
Site Information

Saint Exupery

Friche de la Cabucelle
Source: archiveofaffinities.tumblr.com
Source: archiveofaffinities.tumblr.com
Plan de Déplacements Urbains approved in 2013 shows the planned extensions of metro, tram and a new bus rapid transit network.
Mapping is not simply a process of documenting the visible, but rather revealing spatial and non-spatial relationships that relate urban formation to ecology, economy, and politics.

In order to construct a relational understanding of the conditions that influence Guelph’s growth, through a broad transdisciplinary mediation of different forms of scientific and action research, the GWRUP developed its operative framework assembling methodologies that could give an insight of the connecting threads between the macro and micro conditioners, from the macroeconomic directions of Canada in relation to labor, agriculture and infrastructure, to the micro shifts in vacancy rates in a downtown block or the emerging food justice groups around town.
Mapping is not simply a process of documenting the visible, but rather revealing spatial and non-spatial relationships that relate urban formation to ecology, economy, and politics.

The New City Reader is a newspaper on architecture, public space and the city. The format of the New City Reader is inspired by the dazibao, the Chinese practice of affixing newspapers in public space for them to be read collectively. Editorial work for the New City Reader took place in a purpose-designed office in the New Museum gallery in full public view. The New City Reader consisted of 14 weekly editions guest-edited by a contributing network of architects, theorists, and research groups. Each issue addressed a single section of a typical newspaper (such as Sports, Finance or Obituaries). The sections were available for free at the New Museum and—in emulation of a practice also common in the 19th-century American city before newspapers became cheap and abundant—were posted in public throughout the city for collective reading.


Financier admits guilt to everything but a crime

Bill pension debate over free speech and legacy of the Hobo movement

Israel steps to ban the word ‘Nazi’

Environment loses priority as U.S. pursues trade pact

Homecare coverage, a targeting the poor system over rate regulation and policing

Greek elites start to feel pain for the meltdown

With support of the police, corruption builds cases over official corruption

THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
ARIEL SHARON EMBODIED
ISRAEL’S EVERYMAN

SUZY MENKES
VALENTINO’S MASCULINE I.D.

AUCTIONING ART
THE BEST DEALS GO TO THE BIGGEST COLLECTORS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2014

INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK TIMES

The Terminal adapts the organizational and formal structure of the International New York Times.
Budget : négociations tendues avec Bruxelles, crise de nerfs au PS

L’art contemporain résiste à la crise

SERGE KAMPF, Le livre du siècle

Un destin hors du commun
Mapping is not simply a process of documenting the visible, but rather revealing spatial and non-spatial relationships that relate urban formation to ecology, economy, and politics.


Broersma, Marcel. *FORM, STYLE AND JOURNALISTIC STRATEGIES*, [https://www.rug.nl/staff/m.j.broersma/broersma_introductionformstyle.pdf](https://www.rug.nl/staff/m.j.broersma/broersma_introductionformstyle.pdf)


Rosen, Jay. *Fact and Friction*. Interviewed by Jeffrey Inaba and Talene Montgomery

Lemann, Nicholas. *The Journalistic Method*. Interviewed by Jeffrey Inaba and Talene Montgomery

Lemann, Nicholas. *News Report*. Interviewed by Jeffrey Inaba and Talene Montgomery
Written over a decade ago, within the first phase of the Euromediterranée redevelopment project, Bertoncello and Rodrigues-Malta’s paper explores the construction of a marketable identity in a city which does not have the strong urban or architectural patrimony that would normally facilitate the development of tourism and attract investors or white collar workers. In reality this identity is found in the apparent contradiction of a port city which is at once highly international and therefore cosmopolitan but then also regarded as provincial from a cultural perspective.

In particular, the reliance on the construct of the “Mediterranean” as a cultural signifier and bedrock of an urban renaissance risks extreme superficiality when, according to Bertoncello and Rodrigues-Malta, the city’s true cultural dimension is that which exists outside any institution. The renewed focus on Marseille’s Mediterranean connection, ironically enough, harks back to its role as the lynchpin between France and its colonial empire. Despite the long history of this rhetoric, today it is seen as fresh and projective, as a future state of metropolitanism within cultural and financial markets. In other words, its ambitions are decidedly territorial while its physical scope is not, pointing to a sharp disjunction in terms of ideas of scale.

This international brand of metropolitanism cannot be constructed independently of the city or region within which it is embedded.


Sheila Crane’s Mediterranean Crossroads is a selective history of the city’s architectural and urban development beginning in the inter-war period. Six chapters tell six very specific stories rather than providing a comprehensive overview. Major topics are “Urban Physiognomy,” relating to representation of the city in photography and planning; “Urban Gynecology,” relating to politics and social engineering during wartime; “Urban Purification,” relating to the instrumentalization of urban space for political mandate and Marseille’s particular tendency to destroy its built history; “Imperial Facades,” relating to the perpetual rebuilding of the port and shifts from modernist city building to contemporary image-making; and “Excavating,” relating to the city’s archeological ruins dating back to antiquity.

In particular, the second chapter called “The City in the World: Marseille's Mediterraneanisms,” is of particular relevance. In it, Crane discusses the history of planning and infrastructural works in Marseille in relation to its changing role within the empire and within the nation. As a very important point of passage (for example, in 1938 more than 900,000 people moved through the port of Marseille fleeing the German occupation, far more than the population of the city at the time), infrastructure in Marseille has always been caught between its role in serving a colonial system versus serving an emerging global city. Crane discusses the major urban plans for Marseille, including Jacques Greber’s 1933 plan, Eugene Beaudoin’s 1942 plan, as well as further plan’s under Deferre and Vichy.

Different planning proposals were representations of different visions for the city and its identity. They are visualisations of particular shifts in thought as well as political debate over many decades on the subject of Marseille as either a Capital of the South or a command post of the French empire. Crane also discusses the notion of the “Mediterranean” which remains critical to city branding. In particular she notes that the perception of the Mediterranean as a coherent geopolitical terrain is a specifically European one which does not in fact take into account the scale and heterogeneity of that terrain. Ideas about Marseille’s position at either a point of centrality or a point of periphery are also manifold through maps and diagrams of trade and
transport routes.


Alessi Dell’Umbria was raised in Marseille and continues to live and write about his city from a distinctively Marxist point of view. In The Sinking of Marseille, he details the city’s major political epochs of urban governance in the last 200 years and its resulting disintegration. Dell’Umbria argues that while urbs and civitas coincided (that the city was a political community) in the pre-industrial Marseille, civitas was dismantled by the French nation-state and urbs was dismantled by capitalism. In particular, Marseille’s apparent disregard for its own history, in so far as its parts have regularly been demolished, points to the still constant perception of those in power that the city needs to be fixed, controlled, defeated. The most recent realization of this has been the transformation of the old port, washed of its old identity, into a sanitized pedestrian space for touristic consumption which is ironically founded of the commodification of Marseille’s reputation as a messy but culturally vibrant ethnic mixing pot.

Marseille was a sovereign geographical and political body from France until 1660 when it was annexed by Paris. In remained under centralized control until the French Revolution when it regained independent municipal status. Up until WWII, culminated with strategic bombings by the German army, Marseille went through a series of urban demolition programs that sought to cleanse the city’s older, dirtier neighbourhoods. Only select areas of the Marseille’s Medieval fabric remain, and nothing prior to this. But Marseille’s present urban form is most obviously the product of development between the 1950s and 1970s. In 1953 Marseille came under control of Defferre’s Socialist system, which lasted until his death in 1986, representing the longest control over any of France’s major cities. According to Dell’Umbria, the defining characteristic of this government was the division of town planning and the management of municipal services between the Bourgeoisie and the Socialists.

In 1955 Marseille acquired its first overall city planning vision called the Plan D’urbanisme Directeur (PUD) which remained the framework for all public infrastructure until 1978. Like many planning mandates of the time, the PUD placed priority on the development of roadways for the private car rather than public transportation with parts of the city’s tram network being replaced by buses in the 1950s. Priority was placed on infrastructural development for the middle class South and South East of the city, which received the first metro line in 1977, while simultaneously working class areas in the North were not connected to municipal sewerage until the 1970s. In 1959 the first plan for Habitations a Loyer Minimum (HLM social housing) was put into motion but given increasing land values in the city centre due to free property speculation, 90% of the HLMs were built in the 14th/15th/16th arrondissements in the city’s North and North East. The current North South socio-economic division which characterizes Marseille became entrenched by the 1970s. The 1960s to 1980s in general was a period of both rapid urbanization and the complete decline of the city’s port economy. While the port remains operational, by the 1980s it was primarily acting as a point of transit for hydrocarbons and crude oil from North Africa while all manufacturing and processing that benefitted the working class had ceased to operate. The revival of the port, or rather tertiary services associated with it, has more recently been used as justification for the massive Euromediterranee development despite there being little connection between the two. Furthermore, infrastructure has once again been instrumentalized by connecting the city to Paris via TGV before addressing the lack of city wide networks.


In Marseille Mix, William Firebrace reveals his own experience of trying to understand the plurality and of the city. Through anecdotes, conversations and historical research, framed by the personalities, literature and film from or about Marseille, Firebrace constructs a loose narrative based on the themes of Elsewhere, Cities, Double Speak, Sea, Dangerous Liaisons, Mother Above, and Land. He argues that the reliance on narratives is because Marseille is better represented through film and literature than its otherwise humble physicality communicates. But at the same time these narratives have propagated an imagination of Marseille as dramatic, exotic, promiscuous, full of crime and destitution as well as exuberance and luxury when in reality the city is quite ordinary, even calm and banal.

Through reference to Marseillaiais Fernand Pouillon’s career and specifically construction of La Tourrette, Firebrace discusses the relationship between the universalizing tenants of French modernism and the particularities of Marseille aesthetics and architectural identity. The post-war
reconstruction of the Vieux Port was commissioned from Paris, since Marseille was apparently unable to manage this process itself. Puillon’s work speaks to the humility of the city’s architecture, where multiple periods of city building coexist in uneasy relation given the frequent reconstructions but nonetheless where the whole must work together as a sum of parts with no one part dominating the others. The city resembles more of a system which allows for diversity rather than a unity. This lack of exceptionality is no longer, with the construction of signature projects by Zaha Hadid, Norman Foster, Rudy Ricotti, Kengo Kuma and Boeri Studio. From the planning perspective the city has never been centrally managed, perhaps because it was always held in limbo between the shifting dominance of either the national or municipal government. It has not grown steadily and strategically but rather in bursts of development from different areas which have eventually formed a very large urbanized area.

Firebrace develops the idea of the Double in relation to Marseille’s cultural formation, though it also relates to architectural and urban form. Double does not imply duplicate or doppleganger, but rather an identity that is masked by the appearance of things on the surface. For example, though most Marseillais speak the French the rest of the country is accustomed to hearing, they also speak, but not write, a particular form of Creole French which is incomprehensible to those who don’t. It is a cultural construct of words assimilated from French, the Provencal version of Occitan and the languages of its multiple waves of immigrants: Italians, Corsicans, Greeks, Armenians, Spanish, Comorans, Algerians, and Tunisians. This speaks to Marseille’s ability not to simply assimilate its multiple influences and homogenize them but rather than the city’s identity is constantly shifting according to relation of these influences to each other and French culture in general. This process has contributed to Marseille’s constant resistance to subordination to the centralization of the French state.
The project is a critical cartography masquerading as a newspaper. It is both descriptive and projective.
Outcome
Economics

Seon St Henry station: money thrown to the wind?

The proposed 10bn euros may be just another example of politicians' love for transport in the Quangolds World.

Turning property around in circles

The system is designed to provide a fast, cheap and efficient transport system in the Quangolds World.

There are certain activities that are at the limit of legality...

The stupidity of the "smartivity"

A new residential area was shaped to resemble

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Five Roma families evicted from Bougainville

Keeping the Capital of Culture alive