Giulio Scalisi

2013 ~ 2016

waiting for things to happen

News about the ferguson case, pictures of my cousin's new child and Kim Kardashian's new revealing cover go one after the other as I casually slide the tip of my index finger across the screen of my portable device.
I am not completely sure if that is the way social media were intended to be experienced but, as a I go through this flow of contents, I can not help but block my emotional input. Think about it, if we were supposed to fully react to this condensed series of events as if we were in real life, one after the other, it would be a quite schizophrenic and emotionally exhausting experience. There is really too much going on in front of our eyes to handle… and as I spend my time immersed in this continuous stream of information I can feel the present slipping off my hands.
As an artist and student I always wonder about what position I should take in this flow of pictures or, rather, what ambition I should have in creating a new image or adopting an old one; what should be my position and orientation in this ever changing and slithery present. That is why, in my practice, terrified by the idea of sinking under the waves of this semi-infinite moving global picture, I started thinking about the creation and use of virtual environments: satellites revolving around this said global picture that, just like the moon, are composed of some of the elements of it but that still are detached from it, distant and somehow atemporal.
Nowadays the more an event is relevant the more is shared and liked on social platforms; and as the spectrum of attention gets wider it seems like all the important things are always happening out of our immediate field of action.
My practice is more or less a counterstrategy of this: I am the creator of these artificial and fictional environments so I get to choose the time, the characters and the environment. I get to decide when things happen. I believe that, even though the products of this practice are extremely personal and, yes… dictatorially staged, they are still able to connect with the person they interface with because the elements that make up my work are mostly selected from things we see or hear daily through mass media.
I will go on with my practice as an artist, and continue creating these satellites inhabited by human plus, phantoms, notifications, where the eclipse has gained back its powers, and where the gestures that we repeat daily with our companions will be able to express its full significance and resonance.

you can find more writings like this by me at:

☛ www.earthboundboundless.com

earthbound, boundless

2016

website

Earthbound, Boundless is the title of the thesis I developed in the two years of study at Écal (Lausanne).

The different chapters of the thesis sprout and take inspiration from what Anselm Franke states in the introduction to the catalogue *Animism*: "*The positivism of the modern description of the world relies on the imagination of a negative, which is the result of the same division, and becomes equally naturalised*".

What *Earthbound, Boundless* will try to do is mobilising a discourse on, and opening up, this space of negativity created by the modern project through a series of essays that will focus on subjects like: experience, perception of time, machines, identities, comparison, language, representation and death.

Quoting or paraphrasing the thoughts and works of authors that have dealt with similar topics, I structure my thesis as a dialogue between me and different references coming from books, movies, videogames and such, involving both physical and fictional characters.

Humans with exaggerated or improbable features and cats resonating to the sound of phones… computers anticipating our requests and fridges talking in first person. They all find a home in the pages of *Earthbound, Boundless*.



read it!



1994, title screen of the videogame "Earthbound (Mother 2)" by Shigesato Itoi, Nintendo

2016, Giulio Scalisi

I still remember playing the game some years ago. What a surreal experience! You control this bunch of kids who move from one place to another having to

a walk through the birch tree forest

2016

video-installation

4 by 2 by 2 meters

painted plastic tubes

3d prints and

playdoh

The idea of space and time in Japanese culture has been influenced by the principle of "*Ma*" — the negative space, the relationship between parts, the passing time-space — To think and use the concept of *Ma* means seeing through a wider spectrum, that from convergent becomes wide-spread. To use it, is to depart from the familiar perceptual grid, and to reset our imaginary meter.

Or as Arata Isozaki would put it when he described the creation of the Shintoist shrine: "*Ma is a way of situating the place where the kami* [Japanese deity] *will descend. When worshippers wished to summon a kami to earth they prepared a holy place, himorogi, by setting four poles in the earth to mark the corners of a square or a rectangle* […]".

A parallel could be easily set up between such religious practices and art production. In both cases we put an effort in creating the optimal space in which objects can be charged, either by godly spirits or information. We set up barriers and borders in order to define an *inside* where such events can occur and be real, respectively the shrine or the art space, and an *outside* where such occurrence will stop holding any significance.

I purposely set up these mock-up trees in a semi circle as a way to highlight and exasperate such divisions and through the content of the video, placed in the center of the circle, explore the mental space inside and outside of it.




invisible







the inhabitants of the abyss

2016

video

16:9, 1080p

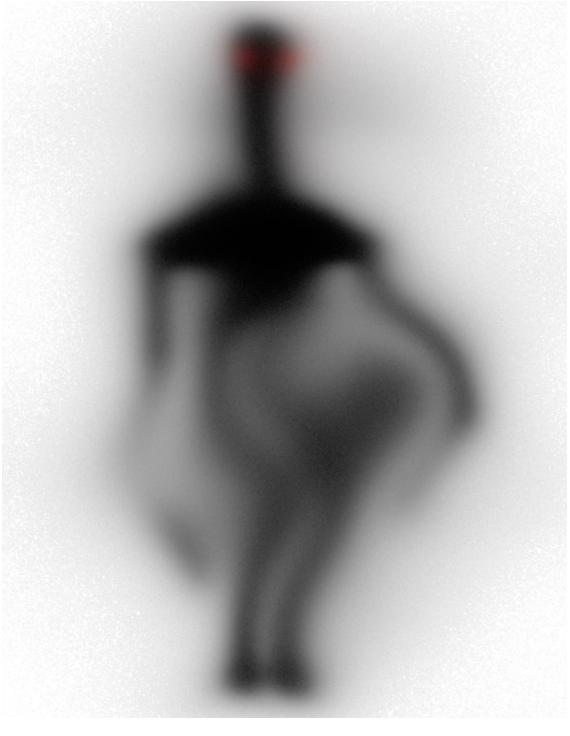
12 minutes

I, you, it, us or them. Inside and outside. Humans and non-humans, male or female, animals and things. Things that are natural or are artificial… nature and culture. The web. Can everything we could be or experience really be inscribed to its completion in general categories?

Is this well oiled mental grid — these countless division across the collective mental landscape — that allow us to identify, distinguish and dissects the world we live in through a pure mental act… Is it really that effective and exhaustive for everybody? Will it really be able to bring us to the promised brighter days or is this promise kept for just a small group of people?

Inside the video an array of voices from beings like apes, trees or computers, will be able to speak and delve into the territory brought up by this set of questions. Not as things or animals being used as a reflection of our subjectivity, but as *critters* speaking in first person.

The narration and the visual aspect of the video end up being really erratic and disorienting — but such work does not strive for an absolute order or *making sense* but for the recovery of one's ability and right to fight, set and renegotiate its own borders, to decide what it is true or false in its own mental territory. Not through isolation but with discussion and participation.



link coming soon...

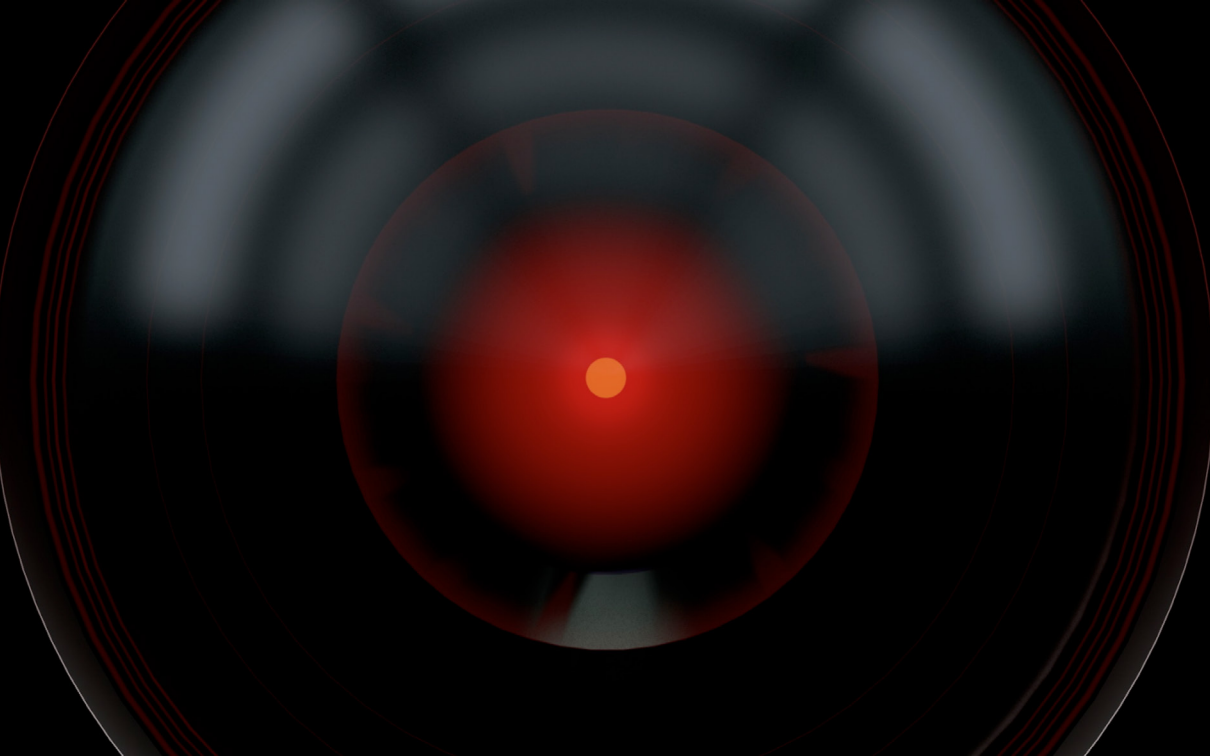

inside

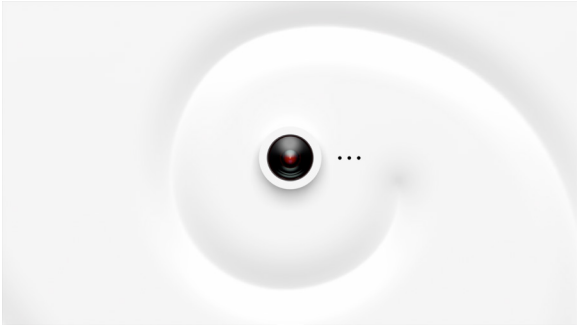

inside




NOBODY HEARS US WHEN WE ARE ALONE IN THE DARK FUTURE










beings with eyes of silicon and glass


and pulsating LEDs for their heartbeat

the leaping hare

2016

installation

60 by 25 by 15 cm

3d print

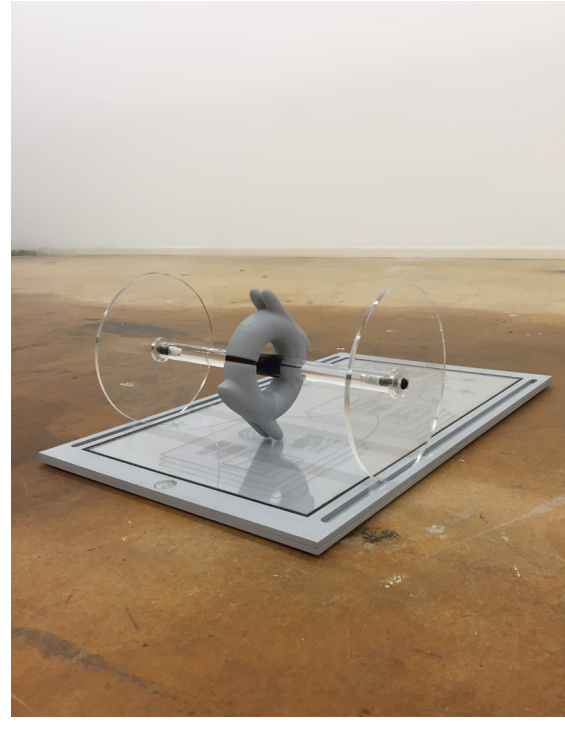
plexiglass

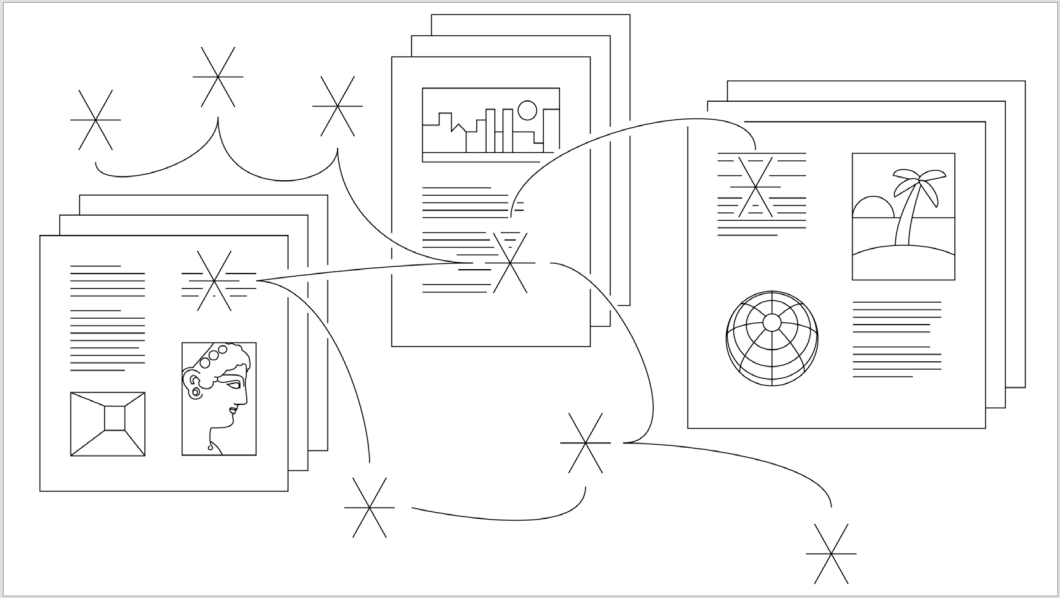
mdf

This piece is meant to be installed together with the video *Dalle Stelle alle Cellule*, that is next in the portfolio, and it wants to explore the way we reach information and travel through our archives of information.

The same icon of *The Leaping Hare* is in fact used in both works. I wanted to put the two pieces together as way to surpass the stillness of sculpture… as if one, seeing the operations performed by the icon in the video, would allow in its mind the repetition of such movements in the still object.

The Leaping Hare is doubled and put together in the shape of a circle and it hovers on an engraved slate reminiscing of a tablet-like device, one we would use to surf on the web. The piece is linked to the earlier work *Like Ghosts* and, sharing some of its core themes, it wants to explore the finitude of our knowledge or rather the limits of the system, the binaries, that allow us to acquire information.





dalle stelle alle cellule

2016

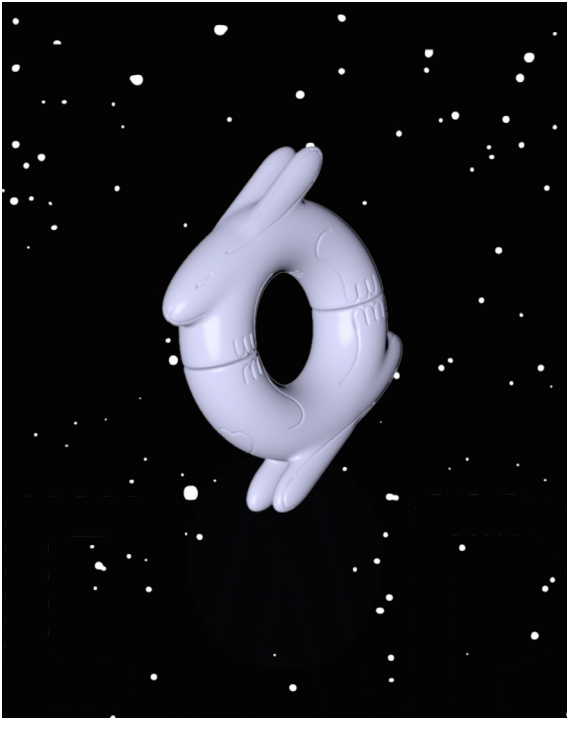
video on monitor

7 minutes on loop

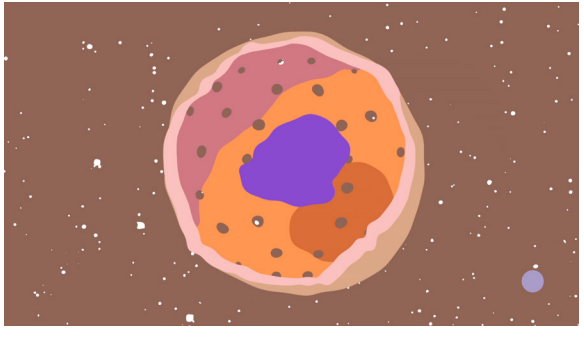
16:9, 1080p,

Dalle Stelle alle Cellule, literally meaning *from the stars to the cells*, it's a mixture of 3D animation, 2D animation and real footage. It consists of a slide-show of illustrations I made looking at picture of celestial bodies and cells that make up our human bodies. The video, being mostly silent and still, is interrupted by some intermissions in the middle and at the end/beginning.

While I was working on this project, I was fascinated by knowledge production and its consequent communication. On how technology can mediate our view on reality, or rather, it is able to render our reality, and how scientific discoveries need to be translated in pictures for mass diffusion. In this field of view that goes from the telescope to the microscope, the intermission wants to give space to different forms of meaning or simply go against the illusory abstract point of view of modern science.



watch it








one is born alone with its abyss


few are the moments he will feel complete

phantoms and notifications

2015

video on iPhone 6

3 minutes on loop

16.9, 1080p (vertical)

This video animation has been designed to be played on an iPhone as I was fascinated by the pockets of information that we send each others everyday and that animate our phones.

The panorama of things that end up creating our surroundings have all been categorised in centuries of intellectual work — smartphones, though, seem to evade or, rather, lay in different categories at once. Objects that through time collect some of our most intimate memories and that wake us up at night to carry out other's people emotions…

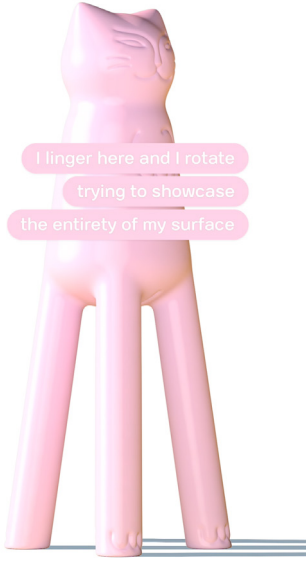
"It's 3 am and you definitely need to go to bed. So you do that, but you can't manage to fall asleep and you lay there alone, with your thoughts as your only companion for the night. Sometimes our brain can be really vicious… it likes to twist the knife when you feel the loneliest.

So you tell it to shut up and you stop listening to it, and you enter a phase of unaware mental stillness — total passivity, nothing to do with meditation. You always keep your phone by the bed, still turned on, and it sporadicly lights up at every notification. As you are about to fall asleep, you see it for what it is… it is awake."



watch it


I am here
can't you see that I exist
I am here
for only you to see


I linger here and I rotate
trying to showcase
the entirety of my surface


when you are the loneliest
I cry for your attention
carrying other people's
emotions

like ghosts

2014

video-installation

9 minutes on loop

16:9, 1080p

This video talks about the tale of a group of fictional characters from the future, *The Leaping Hares* — represented in the pictures below the screen. The contents of this piece and the way they unfold are typical of a 80s' science fiction movie but the way in which they are represented takes advantage of the mediums of our age, primarily the user interface of our internet browsers.

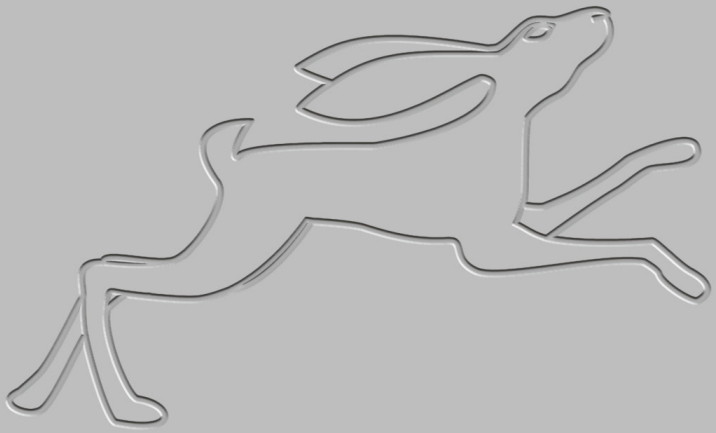
I streamlined and abstracted the most frequent operation of our digital experience, like pop-ups windows and scrolling through internet pages, in order to create a container to convey the informations that make up the video.

The viewer is first introduced to the video with a short poem I wrote highlighting a switch in human's nature, increasingly more immaterial but which in its behaviour and its disregard to the passing of time, closer to that of a beast. After that the entrance of the viewer inside a virtual cathedral allows it to access the website of *The Leaping Hares*.

A series of images and texts unfold as the video browses this simulated website that, one after the other, end up forming a fragmented story that speaks of the conditions of humanity in that dystopian future. Memories of these users who have lost touch with their physical reality and live, love and make experiences in a virtual world created by the information that we share each day in the web.

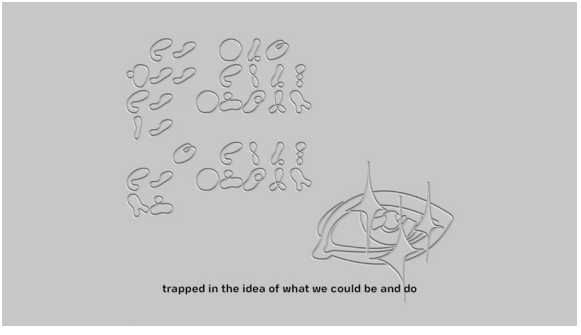


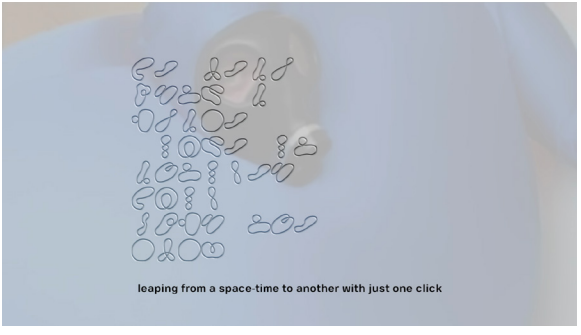
watch it








trapped in the idea of what we could be and do


leaping from a space-time to another with just one click




dropped a stone in the future

2013

variable size

installation made by

27 stones

painted with acrylic

and gouache

This piece was inspired by a native figure from the surroundings of Foligno (Italy), who brings together myth and history: the Sibyl (Sibilla Appenninica). Fascinated by her divinatory skills, I tried to imagine a possible future for this place and, like the Sibyls used to, I fragmented the prediction unfolding the narration on the bottom of 27 stones that were then scattered around the perimeter of the city.

I was just coming from a trip in Pompei and what interested me the most at that point was the idea of creating a picture and then hide it to the world until accidentally discovered. I tell a story that the unintentional audience will be able to freely interpret looking at the different pieces scattered across the village that make up the installation.

















giulio scalisi

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born in Salemi (TP) 1992
lives and works between Milan and Lausanne

2014 - BA in Visual Arts at NABA, Milan, IT

2016 - MA in Visual Arts at ÉCAL, Lausanne, CH

Workshops and Collaborations

2012 - NABA, Milan, Elogio alla Follia
with A. Guerriero, NABA 2012

2013 - Biennale d'Arte di Venezia, Italian Pavilion, La Voglia Matta
by Marcello Maloberti

2013 - Manufatto in Situ 7, Foligno
visiting professors: Croatian collective "what, how & for whom"

Collective Exhibitions

2013 - Amore mio, Palazzo del Ghiaccio, Milan
curated by Marcello Maloberti

2013 - One remembers a part of what one saw and forgets the rest, Care/of DOCVA, Milan, curated by Elvira Vannini

2013 - On Nature and Society, Foligno
curated by Ana Dević and Emanuele De Donno

2013 - Academy Awards: Homeostasis is not enough, Via Farini, Milan
curated by Daniele Maffeis, Giovanna Manzotti and Giulia Mengozzi

2014- tAPC/the Artist's PC, Le Botanique Centre Culturel, Bruxelles
curated by Emanuele De Donno

2014 - Good Guys (Gran Riserva), Gasconade: "Guest", Rome
curated by Luca Castiglioni and Michele D'Aurizio

2014 - Cali Gold Rush, Lucie Fontaine, Milan
curated by Marcello Maloberti and Caterina Iaquinta

2014 - I Frutti D'Oro, Turin
curated by Denis Isaia and Giovanna Manzotti

2015 - Life is a Bed of Roses, Fondation Ricard, Paris
curated by Stephanie Moisdon

2016 - MEANS of Production, Lausanne City
self-curated by the students of the MAAV of ÉCAL