

Review article

A Vision for Brussels: Fuel to the Urban Debate or, at Last, an End to the Brussels Trauma?

Isabelle Doucet

Introduction

On the 15th of March 2007, the exhibition 'A Vision for Brussels: Imagining the Capital of Europe', curated by Pier Vittorio Aureli and Joachim Declerck from the Berlage Institute in Rotterdam, opened its doors at the Brussels BOZAR, in the honourable presence of the city's architecture and urbanism *beau monde*, and with nobody less than José Manuel Barroso, Guy Verhofstadt and Charles Picqué to deliver the opening speeches. The exhibition leaflet announces 'a concrete plan for Brussels as a proper European capital, a European project for the city that connects the different social, spatial and cultural layers of the city in order to provide Europe with a concrete face'. Completing a vision with a concrete project seems indeed a logical outcome of a research project carried out, since 2004, by an international architecture team comprising of sixteen members. But is that really so?

The exhibition and its accompanying publication 'Brussels - a Manifesto. Towards the Capital of Europe' is an occasion to reflect on how Brussels reflects on Brussels.¹ During the last decade, several architecture and urbanism publications on Brussels have emphasised the need for a strong vision for this European Capital. Is it an assumed failure of these studies that allows Berlage to claim a 'Vision for Brussels', as though it were the first? And how does 'A Vision for Brussels' relate to some other 'brand new' attempts to turn a vision for Brussels into reality: two new journals about 'planning the capital' and another Europe-in-Brussels exhibi-

tion, running concurrently?

But delimiting the evaluation of 'A Vision for Brussels' to its relevance for Brussels would be to underestimate its disciplinary critique - as expressed in the manifesto: whereas the exhibition deals with Brussels, the manifesto creates no doubt regarding its twofold ambition to question both Brussels and the architecture and urban design disciplines. Brussels, Europe and especially Architecture are the protagonists in this Berlage show.

'A Vision for Brussels': the exhibition

When entering the exhibition, the stakes become immediately clear: fifty years after the Treaty of Rome (1957) 'the time is ripe for an ambitious project for a fully-fledged Capital of Europe'.² Since the current crisis of Europe is also the crisis of Brussels, the exhibition explores the mutual significance of both: how can Brussels give form to the European political project and what are the challenges related to the presence of Europe in Brussels? In a projected film by Robin Ramaekers, Brussels personalities such as François Schuiten, Gérard Mortier, Guy Verhofstadt, and Geert Van Istendael confirm that Brussels is architecturally a disaster, that there is a lack of vision and that the dream about architecture in Brussels is, in reality, a nightmare.

The transit zone towards the second room subtly announces a shift from a conceptual to an architectural language with a large map of the Brussels Capital Region displaying the nine project sites.

Subtly dissipates when it comes to discussing the nine sites in the second room by means of large drawings and models. Here architectural form and scale rule. Each of the nine dispersed project sites intermingles offices, housing, and symbolic public buildings and places. They are held together by the 'Archipelago' figure - as an alternative for the 'master plan' - including a new 'EU Promenade: a shared ground for all citizens'.³ The Archipelago figure promises not only to better distribute housing and other European functions over the city and its vacant lots; it also promises new encounters between the citizens of Brussels and Europe. However, it remains unclear who are meant by 'citizens' and how encounters will take place concretely.

What *does* become clear, when moving from the conceptual to the project area, and especially after reading the manifesto, is that this project is first of all a disciplinary critique: a refusal to accept that, in a context of endless compromises and unclear powers, architecture and urbanism would be powerless and inefficient. On the contrary, it aims to demonstrate that 'the essence of architecture's intrinsic uniqueness is its *form*'⁴ and that the 'subject of this operation is urbanity itself, seen in its phenomenological trace of our being within the city through the immediate experience of its form'.⁵ It is *by means of* architecture, so the organisers believe, that the idea of Europe can get a concrete form, as a 'political' project, as 'a supranational "federal" European horizon'. By announcing the end of the era of megalomaniac building projects and the definitive end to the trauma of Brussels, 'A Vision for Brussels' indeed directs its critique at both Brussels and the architectural discipline. Berlage's prestige as an institute, its exhibition in the respected BOZAR and the significant press attention cannot but awaken Brussels' policy makers. But does it convince architects as well? If not the exhibition, then maybe the publication 'Brussels - a Manifesto' and a colloquium, in which renowned Brussels scholars such as Lieven De Cauter and Eric Corijn participated,

might do so. With Brussels, Europe, and Architecture as the main characters in the Berlage show, it is, however, *Architecture* that plays the leading part. 'A Vision for Brussels' is a disciplinary critique, test-driven on Brussels' soil. Once again, Brussels is confirmed in its role of a battlefield and as a breeding ground for experiment.

The Brussels battlefield

Spatial planning in Brussels provides evidence of a stubborn tradition of negotiation and compromising. Historically it is characterised by a flexibility towards foreign governors, by a preference of maintaining the neutrality of the country and of materialistic short-term solutions, and by a deep distrust of grand ideologies.⁶ Nevertheless, Brussels has never been short of ambitious projects. Inspired by nineteenth century Haussmannian Paris and industrial London, as well as by twentieth century world trading New York, Brussels too developed and realised grand projects: a neo-classical, megalomaniacal transformation of Brussels by King-urbanist Leopold II and zealously modern projects in response to the modern movement. Notwithstanding the deep social and morphological scars that these projects left behind in their urge to develop a new, ordered and modern Brussels - such as the destruction of entire popular quarters - the 1960s-1970s urbanism reinforced this tradition by emulating Le Corbusier's ideas "in a hasty and mediocre manner".⁷ Due to a failed urbanism, bankrupt real estate developers, and numerous unfinished construction sites, the city centre was gradually abandoned by its population, while architectural designs were increasingly driven by political and administrative negotiations. Brussels, as a locus of conviviality, was replaced by a place serving only real estate and economic interest. While a disciplinary concern grew about the problematic role of the Brussels architects as the ultimate 'decorators of bitterly negotiated office and hotel projects',⁸ the concern about the loss of local identity generated an aversion towards any grand ideology and the creation of urban resistance

and pressure groups. Significantly, the term 'Bruxellisation' was invented by Brussels' urbanists, to describe the 1960s-1970s anarchic development of a historic city in the hands of real estate developers. Despite the pressure groups' difficulty to create powerful and influential counter plans, their anger is fed, even today, by an ongoing planning opportunism and architecture and planning disasters. The 'flexible' climate of this city - in the midst of an architectural, planning and demographic crisis as well as in the midst of a split country without a strong identity - proved the ideal breeding ground for the gradual development of the European Union.

'A Vision for Brussels': not quite new?

Despite 'A Vision for Brussels' and its 'myth of the new', attempts to conceive a proper urban reflection on Brussels already exist. Instead of erasing those efforts, it makes sense to unravel what distinguishes 'A Vision for Brussels' from its predecessors. Rather than 'trying to keep one frame stable', one could 'register the links between unstable and shifting frames'. By doing so, one can trace the 'connections between the controversies themselves rather than try to decide how to settle a given controversy', such as the 'A Vision for Brussels' exhibition.⁹

'Vacant City' was based on a series of 'think-ins' for developing innovative scenarios for the Brussels vacant site of the Mont des Arts. By combining urban and architectural design with a 'theoretical programme' or 'discursive scenario', the proposals are 'concrete fuel for the debate' rather than utopian.¹⁰ Similarly, 'A Moving City', exploring Brussels' nineteenth-century industrial Canal Zone and its post-industrial 'vacancies', combines project proposals with analyses and theoretical essays. Here, the theoretical reflections derive from empirical explorations - rather than vice versa - and form a basis for the design projects. As a result of an organic research process, it delivers a sequence of 'random indications of the dynamics of the contemporary suburb'.¹¹

The approach of 'Brussels, Capital of Europe', also known as the Koolhaas study, is evaluated by most intellectuals as inappropriate for dealing with Europe in Brussels.¹² It is experienced as disturbing that 'even great architects as Rem Koolhaas talk about the European quarter as though the city did not exist' or write reports as mere 'brilliant platitudes, a few plays on words, jokes and visions carefully detached from the Brussels context'.¹³ What should be done, therefore, if even Koolhaas does not have an answer? A more realistic approach, fine-tuned to the specific Brussels situation can be found in 'OmbudsPlanMediateur', the winning competition entry by the collective Aries / MSA (Moritz & Simon Architects) / Idom.¹⁴ It proposed a European civic and cultural pole that would serve as an urban catalyst, whereas the urban would be expressed 'through the mixity of its functions and uses' while a new platform would be launched 'for debate on the European question and the urban question'.¹⁵ Rather than developing a vision based on a mere weak and legitimising enhancement of diversity and multi-culturalism, this project includes the 'concrete' appointment of an urban project coordination and management unit.¹⁶ More recently, and with similar concreteness and realism, 'Change: Brussels Capital of Europe' observed that Brussels might be running out of hope, and that this hope might only be rediscovered by tracing the 'genealogy of the wounds and the strengths of this thousand year old city'.¹⁷ With the help of discussions with architects, this study aimed at rebuilding the city based on genuine, possible projects. That 'Change' aimed at creating a continuous debate is demonstrated by its follow-up publication, 'Re-Change', a 'light' version that was born within only a few weeks, presenting a selection of readers' reactions to the prequel.

Apart from these attempts towards a *proper urban reflection* about Brussels and Europe, the need to involve the *citizen* has been emphasised as well. 'OmbudsPlanMediateur' emphasises *democratic participation* without falling into the trap of a

bottom-up versus top-down debate, a debate that is problematic in both Brussels and the architecture and urbanism disciplines. Strategies building on everyday experiences (inspired by Michel De Certeau and Henri Lefebvre) often prove either powerless or end up being applied merely to modest planning issues. Beyond such debate, Carola Hein has repeatedly argued for a strategy to create (European) capitals using a 'bottom-up' approach, because 'the intervention of the citizens would increase the legitimacy of the EU and counterbalance what is often considered to be a democratic shortcoming'.¹⁸ As such, Brussels could become a 'hub for the polycentric and itinerant capital [...] a figurehead of a network of headquarter cities'.

A vision for the architectural discipline, after all

'A Vision for Brussels' addresses the 'current disciplinary disbelief in architecture and especially towards its main specific manifestation: *form*'.¹⁹ 'A Vision for Brussels' reacts against an architecture that 'enhances spectacle to manifest its presence in the city'²⁰ and against 'spectacular interventions that are only seen within their self-referential appearance'.²¹ Instead, it argues for architecture as 'injections with a big needle' offering itself as the 'provider of symbolic space'. It argues for artefacts that are large in scale but modest in form: a 'new, vast and silent monumentality' but 'without useless utopian-megastructural enthusiasm or gigantic gestures of *architectures parlante*'.²² Moreover, 'A Vision for Brussels' considers the strength of the architectural form an alternative to those studies on the 'everyday' denying the potential power of architecture. According to Elia Zenghelis, writing in the manifesto, the 'celebrated "informality" of our contemporary cities (sprawl, "bottom-up urbanism", "self-organisation" and other similar "mythologies") is in the majority of cases a "Trojan Horse" for the manipulative politics of urban exploitation'.²³ Although one could agree with Zenghelis to the extent that, indeed, 'everybody is welcome to participate as consumer, while nobody

is invited as ruler', this does neither legitimise doing away with participatory efforts from the everyday altogether nor their replacement by a 'new monumentality' that nevertheless remains abstract and unclear regarding its implementation in the Brussels reality and the concrete meaning it allocates to *citizenship*. In the Brussels context of 'resistance to new-build [*sic*] projects as well as nostalgia for the city that had been lost',²⁴ one could argue that it is legitimate to criticise an architectural activism that reclaims the city for its inhabitants by means of a traditional model for the city and by refusing *any* new project 'with little attempt at nuance'. But 'A Vision for Brussels' falls short of reconnecting its monumental architecture with the surrounding Brussels context and with the operative meaning it allocates to *citizenship* in such a heterogeneous and often problematic morphological, social and economic fabric.

'A Vision for Brussels': hard to grasp or hard to criticise?

The exhibition's starting point is promising: attempting to give form to the relation between Brussels and Europe, to do so through architecture, and to stress the importance of European symbolism. Apart from developing a vision for Brussels and Europe, it finally put architecture back on the agenda as well, which was needed for a city like Brussels, suspicious of *grand ideologies* while 'licking' its historical urban wounds. 'A Vision for Brussels' opens again the way for a radical thinking about Brussels and for the creation of *one* single vision, *one plan* (the archipelago plan uniting nine sites), and *one* architecture (new monumentality) for the whole Brussels territory. Planning on a regional scale and reintroducing 'a great urban design concept' is indeed the only way for Brussels to get out of a 'societal debate that has been dominated by local interests since the 1970s'.²⁵ 'A Vision for Brussels' gives new hope for the frustrated position of the Brussels architects.

More problematic is its translation into a realistic

architectural and urban project: as an architectural, social and democratic project, the proposals remain far too abstract and unclear. This is especially problematic regarding the meaning of 'citizen' - much more so than regarding the concrete implementation in the Brussels context - since it is precisely here that emphasis is placed, yet at the same time obscurity is produced. As such 'A Vision for Brussels' circumvents not only precision and concreteness, but also possible critique. For example, the claim that 'for the first time new public spaces make an encounter possible between the citizen and the European Institutions' is impossible to verify.²⁶ *How* this encounter would take place, *who* is meant by 'citizen' and *how* the design of the public spaces would contribute to this encounter, remains unclear: the architectural proposals hardly surpass their manifesto-level. In the Brussels context, where diversity sells well and chaos is beautified, but, at the same time, a context of economic paradoxes, it is indispensable for architecture to address notions such as 'citizenship', 'participation' and 'heterogeneity' simultaneously politically, socially and design-wise. When, for example, creating '850 terraced houses and gardens, for those inhabitants who want to escape the density of Brussels', it should question *who* are meant by 'inhabitants': those who have the economic opportunity to escape? 'A Vision for Brussels' seems to avoid questions of such order by archiving them too hastily into the closed stacks of small-scale, bottom-up urban approaches. As a disciplinary critique, it indeed argues for a rediscovery of architectural 'hardware' - form, urban artefact and landmark - as a way to counter a disciplinary over-emphasis on the city's 'software'. Nevertheless, with its insufficiently elaborated proposals, the project suffers in fact more from its obscured *conceptual* concreteness than from its lack of architectural detailing. Indeed, the replacement of the master plan by the 'Archipelago plan' is much less questionable than the enhancement of rather arbitrary urbanism entities such as the 'mirror city'. Moreover, 'A Vision for Brussels' self-claimed rheto-

ric of the radical, the new, and the controversy, risks silencing its opponents as traditionalists resisting innovation.

Beyond 'A Vision for Brussels': cleaning up the urban battlefield

That 'A Vision for Brussels' does not stand alone in reinforcing a thorough urban dialogue is demonstrated by a series of preceding studies - as delineated by this article - and by a series of concurrent initiatives as well. 'A Vision for Brussels' follows its predecessors in combining a vision for Brussels with design proposals, in enhancing Brussels' multicultural character and heterogeneity as an asset rather than a problem, and in building further on the idea of Brussels as a post-national capital. In contrast, however, to the charm and political correctness of romanticising the 'image of Brussels as a "vacant city" or *terrain vague*²⁷ - as in 'Vacant City' - or the charm of urban dynamics - as in 'A Moving City' - 'A Vision for Brussels' prefers to 'transform the entropic nature of the vacant sites into urban artefacts' and enhance architectural scale to make 'recognisable urban parts [...] intelligible as new metropolitan city sections'. What distinguishes 'A Vision for Brussels' is that it forms a disciplinary critique; that it is about architecture much more than it is about Brussels. Architecture *itself* is enhanced as both the test and nurturing ground for a new urban vision. The exhibition promises the visitor 'a global and concrete solution', which in the end implies that the enhanced tools, such as architectural form, urban artefact and scale, when applied correctly, hold the key to 'solving' the crisis of architecture and the city in *different* contexts, in *any* context.²⁸

Much less controversial than 'A Vision for Brussels' is the concurrent exhibition 'Building(s) for Europe: the Changing Face of Brussels', in the European Parliament. This exhibition displays an inventory of the architectural and urban development of the European Quarter by means of a historical overview, architectural models, a documentation centre

(including urban plans and reports) and an impressive scale model of the entire Brussels Region.²⁹ The simultaneous publication 'Bruxelles: Capitale de l'Europe' by Thierry Demey completes this exhibition as a more detailed and historical description of the developments and architectural patrimony of the European Quarter. The exhibition's 'vision' is limited to the wish that if 'Brussels wants to remain the political capital of Europe', then initiatives must be taken to fill in the gaps in the EU district as well as 'designating suitable sites for the future expansion of institutions'.³⁰ Nevertheless, its extensive display of 'matters of fact' and its denial of an entire history of highly disputed 'matters of concern' can be seen as a statement in itself.³¹ While 'A Vision for Brussels' screams loud and clear in favour of the demolition of the European Parliament - 'a horrible, ugly building'³² - it is only the guestbook of the 'Building(s) for Europe' exhibition that cries in silence of 'a beautiful exhibition about horrific architecture!'

The new journal 'BrU: Planning a Capital' expresses the position, demonstrated already by the theme of its first issue, 'occupation', that planning should deal with the self-organising (occupational) qualities of space and its users too.³³ Whereas this first issue speaks 'software' next to 'hardware', the second issue ('BrU 02') focuses on the theme of 'imagination' as a response to the controversy around 'A Vision for Brussels'. It does so by giving voice to a manifold of reactions - from cynical to visionary, and from provocative to totally misplaced - and by building further on the grounds of the limited but existing consensus: 'the importance and urgency of a determined and innovative city project ... capable of injecting a clear spatial vision into the socio-economic considerations' of the Brussels Region.³⁴ What it consequently addresses is precisely the role, form and representation of this type of project. 'Brussels Studies', the e-journal for academic research on Brussels, is a second new platform supported by the Brussels Regional Government.³⁵ Without disciplinary prefer-

ence, it publishes scientific work on Brussels. Here as well, (new) attention for Europe-in-Brussels can be recognised in two recent contributions by Carola Hein and Philippe Van Parijs.³⁶ What these two new journals on Brussels confirm is that, indeed, a new way of debating Brussels - and architecture - is in full swing. However, different from 'A Vision for Brussels', their awareness that 'Brussels has never been short of interesting ideas, but the incredible thing is its inability to flesh them out',³⁷ makes them more attentive to the remaining question whether these efforts can generate a new way of 'making' Brussels, as well.

Conclusion: an invitation to architecture, addressed to Brussels.

'A Vision for Brussels' invited Brussels - and especially architecture - to think big again and to think Brussels *as a whole*. Not only does it encourage Brussels to reflect on its architectural and identity wounds, it invites all architects to rethink the disciplinary position through offering them a new role by raising the significance of the architectural form. One can be grateful for this new hope for both Brussels and Architecture. But, despite its innovation in proposing a disciplinary critique *by means of* a project proposal, one can also question whether it is wise to use Brussels as a vehicle for working out a disciplinary critique. That architecture *as such* would be sufficient for 'solving' the city has not been demonstrated in the project proposals for 'A Vision for Brussels'. It takes more than renewing monumentality and reinforcing the power of architecture to 'solve' Brussels or any other city. The new institutions required to keep architecture and urbanism on the agenda remain to be concretised, as does the manner in which architecture can reconnect with citizenship, and the manner in which diversity and heterogeneity can become operational rather than merely inspirational.

Is it in the end the architect who decides what is good and bad for the city? The Berlage Institute?

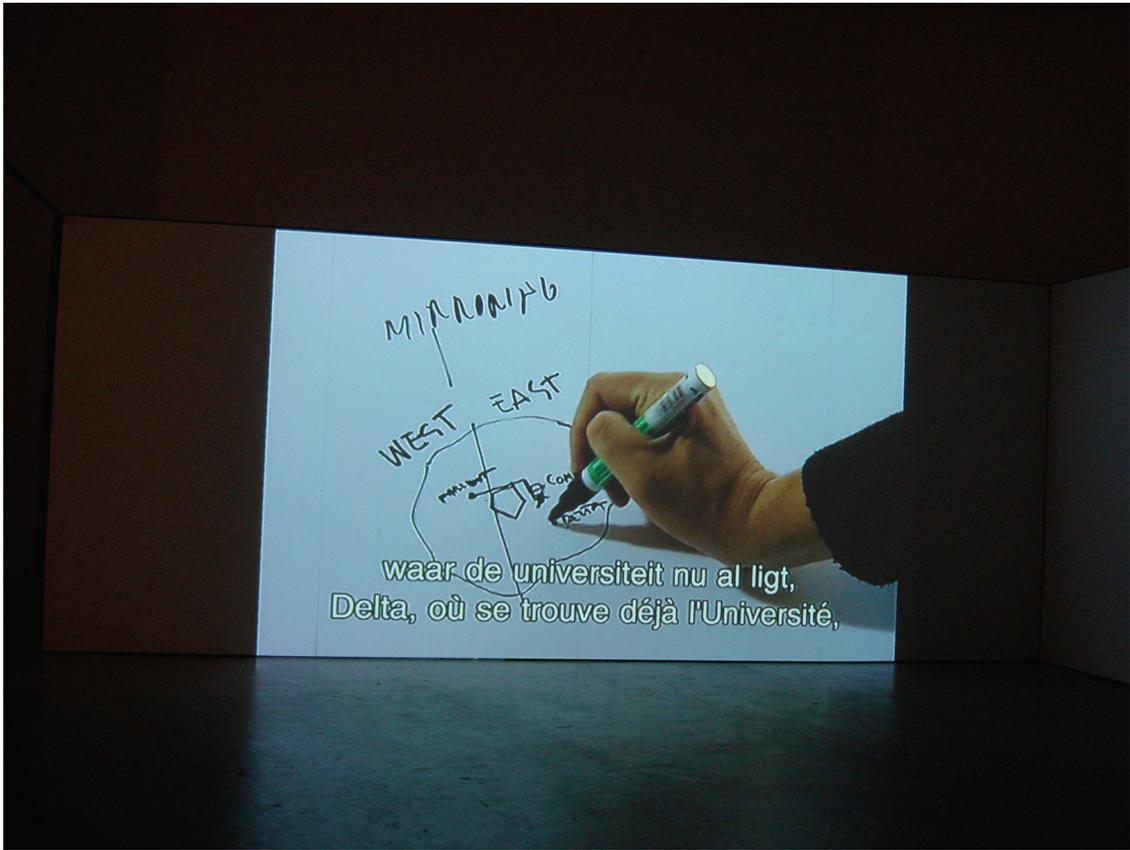


Fig. 1: Video projection at 'A Vision for Brussels' exhibition. Courtesy of author.

Or Aureli himself, outlining Brussels' future with a thick black marker on a white sheet of paper, from a high-rise tower overlooking the city (as he was portrayed in the exhibition video) [fig 1]? If Architecture and urbanism, as important and powerful tools, aim to translate their visions into concrete but realistic projects, they cannot but reconnect to the city and citizenship. It is time to acknowledge that this does not necessarily implicate a return to the old debates on 'participation' but to a *concrete* and *operative* redefinition of 'citizenship'. Instead, 'A Vision for Brussels' architectural gestures, at once monumental and obscure, create an illusion of an all-solving architectural answer to our urban *problematiques*. 'A Vision for Brussels' can nurture the current 'mood for change' in Brussels, only when such illusions are relativised and when Brussels is positioned, next to Architecture, as the leading lady of the show.

Did 'A Vision for Brussels' produce a 'vision' for Brussels? Yes, once again. Did it produce 'one' vision? Yes, at last! Did it also deliver a full-blown 'project' for Brussels and a 'solution' to the crisis of architecture and the city? Alas, not (yet).

Notes

1. *Brussels - a Manifesto. Towards the Capital of Europe*, ed. by Pier Vittorio Aureli and others (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2007). The exhibition ran from 16 March until 16 September 2007 (after prolongation due to its success) at the Centre for Fine Arts Brussels (BOZAR).
2. Joachim Declerck in *Opinions: A Vision for Brussels*, visitors' guide for the exhibition 'A Vision for Brussels: Imagining the Capital of Europe' (Brussels: BOZAR, Berlage Institute and A+, 2007), p. 4.
3. Quoted from the exhibition 'A Vision for Brussels'.
4. Elia Zenghelis, 'For a New Monumentality' in *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 225.
5. For this and following citation: Pier Vittorio Aureli, 'Architecture after Liberalism: Towards the Form of the European Capital City' in *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 186.
6. Vincent Cartuyvels, Pierre Loze, 'The History and Symptoms of a Constantly Evolving City', in *Change: Brussels Capital of Europe*, ed. by Joel Claisse and Liliane Knopes (Brussels: Prisme Editions 2005), p. 35.
7. Ibid. p. 60.
8. Ibid. p. 65.
9. Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 24 & 23, respectively.
10. *Vacant City: Brussels' Mont des Arts Reconsidered*, ed. by Bruno De Meulder and Karina Van Herck (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2000), pp. 9-10. 'Vacant City' is a co-production of Brussels 2000 European City of Culture, OSA K.U.Leuven, and the Fondation Roi Baudouin.
11. Studio Open City, *A Moving City: Three Years of Architectural Explorations in Brussels' Canal Zone* (Brussels: Centrum voor Architectuur en Design, 1998), p. 10.
12. In 2001, a group of intellectuals from varied backgrounds (including Umberto Eco and Rem Koolhaas) were invited by Romani Prodi (President of the Commission) and Guy Verhofstadt (Belgian Prime Minister), to discuss Brussels as a European Capital, resulting in 'Brussels Capital of Europe, Final Report October 2001' (unpublished, European Commission, Belgian Presidency 2001).
13. Geert Van Istendael, in *Opinions*, p. 8; Lucien Kroll, 'Brussels New Town', in *Change*, p. 115.
14. The winning entry of the public tender organised in 2003 by the Chancellery of the Belgian Prime Minister (Guy Verhofstadt) and the Cabinet of the Brussels Capital Region's Minister-President (Charles Picqué), for developing the European zone. See *Change*, pp. 212-21.
15. *Change*, p. 214. This 'urban catalyst' is to be implemented on the crossroads of the institutional axis (Schuman-Luxembourg) and the citizens' axis of the Valley of the Maelbeek.
16. It would consist of a board of (70% Belgian and 30%

- EU) directors, a consulting committee and an operating structure (directed by an architect-urban planner). See *Change*, pp. 220-21.
17. Claisse and Knopes, in *Change*, p. 19.
18. Carola Hein, 'Brussels and the Headquarter Cities of the European Union', in *Change*, p. 121. The following citation: pp. 120-21.
19. Aureli, in *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 192.
20. Joachim Declerck in Jan Braet, 'A Vision for Brussels - Hoofdarchipel van Europa', *Knack Magazine*, 12 (March 2007), pp. 32-35.
21. For this and following citation: Aureli and Declerck, in *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 31.
22. Ibid. p. 31; and Aureli, *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 191.
23. For this and following citation: Elia Zenghelis, in *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 227.
24. For this and following citation: Géry Leloutre and Iwan Strauven, 'Brussels-Europe: An Aporia?', in *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 215.
25. Géry Leloutre and Iwan Strauven, *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 223.
26. Declerck, in *Opinions*, p. 4.
27. For this and following citation: Aureli, *Brussels - a Manifesto*, p. 191.
28. 'A Vision for Brussels' reuses certain instruments of design and planning such as Ungers' archipelago, Koolhaas' 'Exodus', Rossi's 'silent monuments' and 'urban artefacts', in different contexts.
29. Organised and funded by Fonds Quartier Européen, Fondation Roi Baudouin, and the Brussels Capital Region. It ran from 5 May to 30 September 2007, in the Luxembourg Station (European Parliament).
30. Alain De Neef, *Building(s) for Europe: The Changing Face of Brussels*, visitors' guide 2007. Thierry Demey, Bruxelles, Capitale de l'Europe, (Brussels: Badaeux Guides Histoire Patrimoine, 2007).
31. As by Bruno Latour in 'Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern', *Critical Inquiry*, 30, no. 2, Winter (2004); and *Reassembling the Social*, pp. 87-120.
32. Aureli in the 'A Vision for Brussels' exhibition video by Robin Ramaekers.
33. Initiated by CIVA (Centre Internationale pour la Ville, l'Architecture et le Paysage) and the Brussels Regional Planning department (Benoît Périlleux). See: *BrU 01- Occupation*, ed. by Benoît Périlleux (Brussels: AATL/CIVA, February 2007); and, *BrU 02- Imagination*, ed. by Périlleux and Bunkerhotel (June 2007).
34. Leloutre, 'Editorial', *BrU 02 - Imagination*, p. c.
35. Appears monthly since December 2006. Though supported by the Brussels Capital Region, it functions independently as a collaboration between universities (Michel Hubert ed.).
36. Philippe Van Parijs, 'Brussels Capital of Europe: the New Linguistic Challenges', *Brussels Studies*, Issue 6 - 03/05/2007; and Carola Hein, 'The Polycentric and Opportunistic Capital of Europe: a New Model for the Siting and Reallocation of EU Headquarters and the Design of European Districts in Brussels and other Host Cities', *Brussels Studies*, Issue 2 - 18/12/2006 (see www.brusselsstudies.be)
37. François Schuiten, in *Opinions*, p. 16.

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Biography

Isabelle Doucet holds a degree in Architecture and has been a scientific researcher since 2004 within the frame of Prospective Research for Brussels (IWOIB, the Brussels Capital Region). She is linked with W&K Dep. Architectuur Sint-Lucas Brussels and - carrying out a Ph.D – with Delft Technical University (the Netherlands). She is furthermore involved in the Cosmopolis XL Network (Free University of Brussels), and has taught in several European Architecture Faculties.