

THE UNADAPTED

Luc Deleu (1944) is a Belgian artist, an architect and town planner. He is also the founder of T.O.P Office (Turning Op Planning!), Antwerp. More than being alternatively or simultaneously one or another, Deleu positions himself as an 'urbanist'. As he refers in the *Orban Manifesto* (1980), "The urbanist (urban planner) is now primarily a theoretician, who in rare cases realizes his visionary views on spaces of planet earth.." [1]

Through their visionary ideas, *urbanists* turn attention to a global consciousness instead of a local preoccupation. Thinking architecture and urban planning according to a (visionary) world scale brings up issues related with the spatial impact of building under demographics explosion or the current and future environmental circumstances on a micro-level.

In order to respond to this new scenario, the *urban planner* must act according to priorities, no longer based on "esthetic and style" elements but on a new "situation of 'do-it-yourself' architecture and self made cities" [2]. Differently from the figure of the utopian architect, the *urbanist* assumes primarily the function of the researcher, aiming at instigating new ways of thinking on architecture and urbanism. Besides researching on a specific subject matter it is also clear the importance in devising 'urban' tools and research methods, thus amplifying the scope of possibilities within urbanism itself. It is within this context that one can see the figure of the 'urbanist' taking action, and ultimately from the need to discuss the current praxis of urban planning.



'Orban Space: Luc Deleu - T.O.P. office', overview at Stroom photo: Rob Kollaard, courtesy Stroom Den Haag

The exhibition at Stroom Den Haag - *Orban Space: Luc Deleu - T.O.P. Office* - is mainly structured around the project *Orban Space*, initiated in 2006. Among other aspects, the project seeks to "develop a theoretical framework and a practical methodology to think about public space on a global scale" [3]. Also displayed are past projects that, in one way or another contribute to the understanding of the project. One of these is *The Unadapted City*.

The Unadapted City (D.O.S - De Onangepaste Stad) is a long-term concept based project that focuses on the research and development of models for the implementation of urban facilities. The project establishes itself as a critique to the current aims of architecture and urbanism, where private and corporative interests are privileged towards thinking of infrastructures, services and individual liberties. Within *The Unadapted City*, Luc Deleu

ZOEK

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ART AGENDA

14.02.14
Opening exhibition Radical Humanism with Tamy Ben-Tor & Miki Carmi

20.02.14 om 14.00 uur
[Tales to Tell: schrijfworkshop door Writerskitchen, Stroom Den Haag, Hogewal, Den Haag, Nederland
\(http://www.stroom.nl/activiteit?id=2801651\)](http://www.stroom.nl/activiteit?id=2801651)

20.02.14 om 20.00 uur
[The Knight's Move: Edward Skidelsky, Stroom Den Haag
\(http://www.stroom.nl/activiteit?id=6107334\)](http://www.stroom.nl/activiteit?id=6107334)

22.02.14
Opening tentoonstelling van Phil van de Klundert: ruimtelijk werk, Pulchri Studio
(<http://www.pulchri.nl/tentoons>)

22.02.14
Opening tentoonstelling van Randy Klinger: tekeningen, Pulchri Studio
(<http://www.pulchri.nl/tentoons>)

22.02.14
Opening tentoonstelling 'London Calling': uitwisselingstentoonstelling Engelse kunstenaars (in samenwerking met de APT Gallery te Londen), Pulchri Studio
(<http://www.pulchri.nl/tentoons>)

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Er zijn geen aanstaande deadlines.

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KORT NIEUWS

15.10.13
(<http://jegensevens.nl/2013/10/ouuborgprijs-2013-voor-marcel-van-eden>)
(http://www.stroom.nl/paginas/pa_id=7252859)

09.10.13
(<http://jegensevens.nl/2013/10/kalnieuwe-directeur-kabk>)
(<http://www.kabk.nl/newsitem?newsid=0685&cat=09>)

27.07.13
(<http://jegensevens.nl/2013/07/walde-maria/>)
[Walter de Maria overleden
\(http://www.kunstbeeld.nl/nl/nide-maria-overleden.html\)](http://www.kunstbeeld.nl/nl/nide-maria-overleden.html)

26.07.13
(<http://jegensevens.nl/2013/07/str2/>)
Jaarverslag 2012 Stroom
(<http://issuu.com/stroomdenha>)

20.07.13
(<http://jegensevens.nl/2013/07/biebessie-stroom-n-nuur/>)
Biebessie Stroom N. Nuur
(http://www.stroom.nl/paginas/pa_id=7023741)

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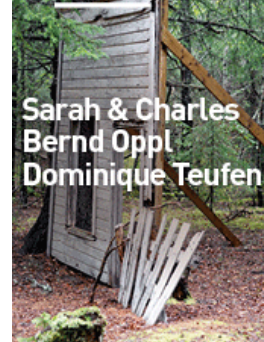
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proposes a turn around. In order to do so, he makes use of common urban planning investigation practices such as collecting territorial data, presenting numeric plans and other visual and non-visual elements. Though one could think that he makes use of this not with the 'same level of seriousness' as often seen in other urban planning projects (Balau, 2004)^[4]. In fact, Deleu brings into his research a certain level of humor, something that can also be perceived in the way the exhibition *Orban Space: Luc Deleu - T.O.P. Office* is displayed at Stroom Den Haag. Another example of his humorous approach is the way cities and infrastructures (within *The Unadapted City* project) are named- Powerpoint, Unité, Dymaxion, Broodacre, Chandigarh, Brikabrak, Dinkytown, Octopus, Halfweg,... -



'Orban Space: Luc Deleu - T.O.P. office', overview at Stroom, photo: © Katia Borges

Aspects of humor and arbitrariness shouldn't be mistaken though when considering the seriousness and complexity of the project. These aspects should be taken into account especially regarding the methodology's critical value. It is perhaps due to this approach that the research sets free from the conventional practices within the real of architecture and urban planning, creating a space for implementing its own rules, measuring tools and ways of display. It clearly doesn't seek to 'adapt' to established forms and practices.

A few months ago and curiously also at Stroom Den Haag, Anthony Huberman brought into discussion the concept of 'being maladjusted'- a possible methodology and a way to transgress the common practices of curating and/or running an art institution. After encountering the work of Luc Deleu - T.O.P Office I found myself thinking of two figures - 'The Maladjusted' and 'The Unadapted' - both operating within their specific contexts.

Although coming from different directions, the echoing effect produced between these two is certainly something that deserves audible attention.

ORBAN SPACE: Luc Deleu - T.O.P. Office

Curated by Wouter Davidts & Stefan Vervoort in dialogue with T.O.P. Office

January 20 - March 24, 2013

^[1] Reviewed translation of the Orban Planning Manifesto, originally published in the catalogue "Open Space", 1980, ICC-Antwerp
<http://www.topoffice.to/Orban%20Planning%20Manifesto.html>
<http://www.topoffice.to/Orban%20Planning%20Manifesto.html>
 (accessed 18 March 2013)

^[2] idem

^[3] Wouter Davidts and Stefan Vervoort, 2013, see exhibition booklet 'Orban Space, Luc Deleu - T.O.P. Office, Stroom Den Haag, January 20- March 24, 2013.

^[4] Luc Deleu: the architect ought to stop asking himself why his work is not art., article on Luc Deleu by Raymond Balau, 2004. <http://www.muha.be/template.php?>

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1 / [AanTekening weekendeditie](#)
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[weekendeditie-6/\)](#)

3 / [Charlotte Schleiffert bij](#)
[Heden](#)
[\(http://jegensevens.nl/2014,](#)
[schleiffert-bij-heden/\)](#)

4 / [Broedplaatsen debat](#)
[\(http://jegensevens.nl/2014,](#)
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1 / [De zee die van de muren](#)
[klotst](#)
[\(http://jegensevens.nl/2014,](#)
[zee-die-van-de-muren-](#)
[klotst/\)](#)

4 / [Erik Pape, Philip Akkerman,](#)
[Rens Krikhaar #1](#)
[\(http://jegensevens.nl/2012,](#)
[pape-philip-akkerman-rens-](#)
[krikhaar-1/\)](#)

[id=30&la=en](http://www.muhka.be/template.php?id=30&la=en) (<http://www.muhka.be/template.php?id=30&la=en>) (accessed 20 March, 2013).

Patrícia Pinheiro de Sousa |

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