

MANIFESTA 13 MARSEILLE

Le Grand Puzzle



MVRDV

The Why Factory

Le Grand Puzzle

Urban study by MVRDV and The Why Factory (Delft University of Technology)
commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille 2020

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This pre-biennial urban study, produced by Rotterdam-based architectural studio MVRDV and The Why Factory (Delft University of Technology), was commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille. It was conducted between September 2018 and February 2020. In March 2020 whilst the Covid-19 crisis escalated throughout the world, the publication of *Le Grand Puzzle* was already near completion.

This global pandemic will reshape our values and determine our social, economic and political decisions for years to come. Though some of the study's questions might be posed differently today, the underlying facts and tendencies laid bare in Manifesta 13 *Le Grand Puzzle* still remain as possibilities for our common future.

In April 2020, Manifesta 13 commissioned local photographer Olivier Sarrazin to capture the empty streets of Marseille during the lockdown. His photographs are included here, as a reminder of these strange and testing times.

FOREWORDS

JEAN-CLAUDE GAUDIN

12

Mayor of Marseille,
Honorary Vice-President
of the Senate of the French Republic

WINY MAAS

14

Co-founder of MVRDV and
Director of The Why Factory
(Delft University of Technology)

HEDWIG FIJEN

16

Founding Director of Manifesta

MATHILDE RUBINSTEIN

18

General Coordinator
Manifesta 13 Marseille

ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE FOR MARSEILLE:

MANIFESTA 13 AND THE HYMN OF THE MARSEILLAIS.ES

28

Hedwig Fijen

1	MARSEILLE MANUAL: FROM PUZZLE TO MOSAIC Winy Maas	37
2	MARSEILLE MINDSET MVRDV & The Why Factory	45
3	MARSEILLE MOMENTS MVRDV & The Why Factory	61
4	MARSEILLE MAPS MVRDV & The Why Factory	109
5	MARSEILLE MIRACLES The Why Factory	187
6	MARSEILLE MOTION Joke Quintens Tarik Ghezali	263
7	MARSEILLE MOSAIC Winy Maas	285



ARRIVEE

SPAL



TOULON
TOULON

TOUTES
DIRECTIONS

5.40







ensemble

RUE
des
TROIS
MARS

R
PAST

SAVER

MONIB

TMS
A 2018



JEAN-CLAUDE GAUDIN

MAYOR OF MARSEILLE AND HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENT
OF THE SENATE OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

Marseille is a cosmopolitan city and a place that welcomes outsiders. It is home to a community and an economic centre for trade and commerce. A socially engaged city, Marseille has attracted artists ever since the creators of the Cosquer Cave paintings 27,000 years ago. Many artists have marked Marseille's history, including the more than 600 who now live and work in the city. A multitude of public and private actors facilitate the city's burgeoning artistic scene, which embraces all forms of creativity.

A city of dialogue and culture, Marseille is the quintessential setting for the arts.

The Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture demonstrated the city's creative energy, turning public space into a boundless source of inspiration for art, research and innovation. It generated new artistic practices and transformed the image of Marseille in the eyes of its inhabitants and the world.

In 2013 the results of a process of urban transformation, initiated 20 years earlier, were showcased. Determined to build on this success, in 2015 Marseille applied to host Manifesta 13, a highly renowned contemporary art biennial yet to be held in France. This application included an invitation to Manifesta's experts to look at the city from an outside perspective. They were asked to think about Marseille's inhabitants, distinct practices, strengths and weaknesses — but above all its exceptional potential. Marseille captured the interest of the Manifesta Foundation team, who were fascinated by this unique space of energy and encounters, this cultural melting pot in constant motion. By welcoming Manifesta 13 Marseille, the city looks to the future. We are trying to imagine the

city of tomorrow and transform our policies of audience development and cultural outreach. The current health crisis affecting us all only exacerbates the need to reflect on ways of forward planning. The city wants to allow everyone to engage with contemporary artistic creation, both in terms of its work and characteristic concepts. In doing so, we hope to encourage people to reflect on and discuss major social questions. Manifesta 13 Marseille is the ideal testing ground for this.

Manifesta 13 Marseille will take place within the urban fabric of the city in totally new ways, ways that were invented in response to COVID 19! It will engage closely with local communities and artists and aims to make culture a permanent feature of urban life — a part of Marseille's social contract. Through its original cultural programme, conceived with current social issues in mind, Manifesta 13 Marseille will attract public interest and bring local people face to face with contemporary art practices. The expertise brought by the Manifesta 13 Marseille team will help to further strengthen the burgeoning local art scene, whose abundant potential was demonstrated in 2013.

The international reach of Manifesta 13 Marseille will help to promote the city's reputation further afield. The quality of the event and the presence of international artists working with the local public, as well as the city's ability to bounce back in times of adversity will be seen far beyond the city.

Organised in traditions of both local popular gatherings and major international events, Manifesta 13 Marseille will place Marseille and its metropolitan area at the forefront of contemporary culture. Generating energy and appeal for the local area, the event will leave a clear and manifest trace on Marseille's collective memory.

WINY MAAS

CO-FOUNDER OF MVRDV AND DIRECTOR OF THE WHY FACTORY
(DELFT UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY)

“Can an antimodel of a city be a place where to think the future?” was the title of the first bid sent by the City of Marseille to the director of Manifesta in 2015. Marseille is often presented as a world unto itself. Geographically isolated behind the barrier of rocky hills, facing the Mediterranean Sea and north Africa, the city has a reputation for disobedience, multiculturalism and complexities.

As a city of flux, transit and trade, Marseille responds to a diversity of contradictory connotations. Today, the city offers a rare prism through which to investigate multiple questions crucial to connecting Europe’s future and current crises. Marseille reveals much about how people have dealt with displacement, exile, dispossessions, cultural resistance and assimilation as well as the social consequences of these. It also presents approaches to urban renewal, religious diversity and economic transitions, which are necessary to safeguard the social and cultural diversity of togetherness.¹

Our first encounter with the City of Marseille took place in 2018, when we accepted the challenging invitation by Manifesta to conduct the pre-biennial urban research for 2020.

It became a huge, exciting challenge and a complex journey that we, MVRDV and The Why Factory, were allowed to pursue. We therefore thank Manifesta 13 Marseille’s director and the team for their generous invitation to the biennial, the city of Marseille and all those, who shared their stories, opened their institutions, schools and doors to us and placed at our disposal all the data, histories, knowledge and support we needed to understand this incredibly complex puzzle. Without their help, our team would not have been able to

analyse, digest and develop our concept and all our findings. We thank all of the interviewees in Marseille for their valuable time and their patience, including the residents of Marseille; the designers; representatives of bottom-up associations; city representatives; academics; experts and representatives of the education, healthcare, architectural and urban sectors. We thank them for giving us their time, allowing us to enter their homes, their offices, their Marseille. We congratulate them for keeping their beloved city alive.

We extend our immense gratitude to the students from the Delft University of Technology (TU Delft), the National Higher School of Architecture of Marseille (ENSA-Marseille) and the Marseille-Mediterranean College of Art and Design (ESADMM). Without their time and dedication the proposals that created this Mosaic of ideas, utopias and dreams would not have seen the light of day.

We thank the professors of these universities in Marseille for believing in our project and allowing their students to join this collective effort.

We greatly thank the team at AGAM (Agence d'urbanisme de l'agglomération Marseillaise) for the time they spent reviewing the data and sources of the cartography we produced. We thank the team of *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles*, Joke Quintens and Tarik Ghezali and their colleagues, for helping us complete the Mosaic through a citizen network. This network will hopefully continue as Manifesta 13 Marseille's legacy, encompassing the ways in which the city is positioned, dreamt of and further developed from the bottom up, drawing inspiration from its 850,000 citizens, long after the departure of the biennial.

1. Referenced from Marseille's official bid for Manifesta 13.

HEDWIG FIJEN

FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF MANIFESTA

Whilst writing this text, in the midst of the 2020 pandemic, I can almost hear the windows of the world closing. Everywhere governments have decided to close borders and communities have been isolated in their homes for more than two months now. These unprecedented times, facing emergencies that threaten the world as we know it now, have urged us to rethink and remodel our lives, economies, dreams and realities, including the very concept and methodology of something we call the biennial.

It's been five years now since the multicultural and diverse City of Marseille made a bid to host Manifesta 13 in Marseille in 2020, as a follow-up to the successful European Cultural Capital in 2013. As part of the pre-biennial research, Manifesta has commissioned for the second time an urban study: this time by Rotterdam based MVRDV, Winy Maas and the Why Factory, supported by Kristina Knauf, Javier Arpa Fernández, Adrien Ravon and Claudia Mainardi.

The study, called *Le Grand Puzzle*, was presented in Marseille in February 2019 and it was followed not by an architectural intervention (as initially planned), but by 22 workshops with local citizens called *Tour de Tous les Possible*. This was made possible by Marseille-based Tarik Ghezali and Joke Quintens, to whom we owe immense gratitude for their contribution, expertise, time and commitment.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all our supporters from the City of Marseille, the Marseille museums, the cultural institutions, the participants, our staff members, our colleagues and sponsors who for the last four

years have given us a sense of belonging, supported our collective actions and helped create a Manifesta 13 community.

I would also like to thank architect Winy Maas and his colleagues from MVRDV and The Why Factory, who accepted my invitation to work in a truly inter-disciplinary manner. They created a holistic new perspective for both the City of Marseille now and in the future, as well as a new basis for artistic and social practices related to the spaces MVRDV included in their research. They also fostered a more transparent context for Manifesta 13 in a spirit of cohabitation and coexistence.

Special thanks to Anne-Marie d'Estienne d'Orves, Deputy of the Mayor of Marseille for Culture, Living Arts, Museums, Public Libraries and Art Schools, Marie-Hélène Feraud-Grégori, Councillor of the City of Marseille for the Opera, the Odeon and Contemporary Art, and Sébastien Cavalier, Director for Cultural Affairs of the City of Marseille, who highly supported the candidacy of Marseille for Manifesta 13.

My deep gratitude goes to the members of the Board of the Association Manifesta 13: Jean de Loisy (Vice President), Marc Bollet, Hendrikje Crebolder, Hendrik Driessen, Hélène Guenin and Peter Paul Kainrath, who supported us in this complex road towards the gradual launch and opening of Manifesta 13 in the late summer and autumn of 2020.

Without the relentless support and determination of Emilia van Lynden, Head of Communication and Publications and Agata Bar, Publications Coordinator, this book would not have been realised. I would also like to thank my colleagues who contributed to the development of this Manifesta 13 publication: Paul Domela, Marieke van Hal, Yana Klichuk, Aleth Mandula, Joana Monbaron, Mathilde Rubinstein, Béatrice Simonet, Tatiana Tarragó and Francesca Verga.

My warm thanks go to our German publisher Hatje Cantz for all their patience and trust.

MATHILDE RUBINSTEIN

GENERAL COORDINATOR MANIFESTA 13 MARSEILLE

Towards the end of the summer of 2018, the newly commissioned architectural office MVRDV and The Why Factory, led by Winy Maas, began their urban research for Manifesta 13 Marseille. They were joined by Manifesta's permanent team who had recently arrived from Palermo and were settling into the city for a stay of approximately two and a half years. As the newly appointed General Coordinator of Manifesta's 13th edition, and as a Marseillaise, I had the privilege of accompanying the research team from MVRDV and The Why Factory as they took their first steps. Together, we were determined to understand the *substantifique moelle* as François Rabelais put it — the pith and marrow, the substance of Marseille. From the outset, it was a considerable challenge.

After all, how can one adequately communicate the complexity and intensity of Marseille's history, its cultural heritage, its inhabitants, its contours and topography? How can one demonstrate how this city, with its fiercely proud spirit, its creativity and its remarkable resilience, leaves no one indifferent and demands a personal commitment?

Between 2017 and 2018, preliminary workshops took place between the Manifesta 13 team and the cultural and non-profit communities of the city and its surrounding region. These workshops explored the scope and ambitions of the biennial in Marseille. Manifesta 13 Marseille aimed to tune into all the local key institutional stakeholders and leaders of social associations in its temporary new home. The intention was to co-create a framework both for the city of Marseille as well as a foundation of the 13th edition of Manifesta and to continue the transformation of the biennial model that had been set in motion during the

12th edition in Palermo. This was also an opportunity for the people of Marseille and its region to investigate their position amongst other European metropolises, not only from a cultural and artistic point of view.

This was where the work of Winy Maas, MVRDV and The Why Factory (part of Delft University of Technology) came into its own. They were challenged to advise city and policymakers about building a sustainable Marseille as the cohesive city of tomorrow. Their aim was to reveal the promise and potential of Marseille and its region, whilst taking into consideration all its complexities. Ultimately, this pre-biennial study would also serve as an inspirational think tank for the participants of Manifesta 13 Marseille and in turn put the city on the global map. This research extended creative art beyond its conventional limits, engaging in a dialogue with the city's inhabitants, far from the usual clichés.

MVRDV and The Why Factory's initial meetings were based on the ground-work done by Joana Monbaron, research assistant for Manifesta 13 Marseille. Joana's work facilitated a closer reading of the multiple facets of the city and its region, spanning both the well-known and the more hidden features. These meetings included crucial figures from the community, decision makers from leading industries, cultural actors, politicians and inhabitants. Subsequently, we travelled the city, from north to south, from east to west. We explored the sea, the port, Calanques (the national park). We met citizen-led collectives, embraced their cultural and artistic effervescence, delved deep into their history, strode the length and breadth of this metropolis and discovered what football really means to the people of Marseille. We navigated the flow, saw how public transport and health services are organised and listened to the urban planners in charge of major projects for the city and the metropolis.

Soon enough, this team of talented professional urban planners were fascinated by the complexity of Marseille, a quite unclassifiable place, unlike any other city in the world. The intricacies of this pre-biennial study demanded more insights and more time. Then, right in the middle of this research two buildings collapsed on the rue d'Aubagne, killing eight people. This tragedy, the echoes of which will be felt for a long while to come, took on a particular meaning for the team. It demanded new research and called for new analysis and perspectives. The research project called *Le Grand Puzzle* was thus transformed into a vast body of 1,200 pages of stories, traces and facts — a mapping of the city of Marseille as it was in the autumn of 2018.

I believe this mapping was done at a very particular moment and was not intended to reflect the changes already carried out by the city, nor the actions being undertaken for its continuous development. These observations provoked reflections and proposals by city councillors and citizens. The proposals took on an idealised form, thanks to the students from the Delft University of Technology, the National Higher School of Architecture of Marseille (ENSA-Marseille) and the Marseille-Mediterranean College of Art and Design (ESADMM). These young students, who had a long-term vision for the future of Marseille, produced over 100 ideas for the city, represented on a model of approximately 200m² at Marseille's J1, a harbour building. This magnificent building encompasses the entire harbour area of Marseille and allows one to study the components of its urban

structure at a glance: the sea and the hillside, the industrial zones, the port, the Panier neighbourhood, the new business area of La Joliette and more.

Initially, the idea for Manifesta 13 Marseille had been to transform one of MVRDV's workshop proposals into an artistic and architectural intervention in the public space in the spring of 2019. After the tragic events of November 2018, it seemed more appropriate to draw inspiration from one of the so-called citizen consultation movements that are currently flourishing throughout Europe. Struck by the creativity and the capacities of the people we met, the idea was to ask Marseillais about their dreams for the city and then turn these into concrete proposals. *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles* was born, based on the topics in *Le Grand Puzzle*. Let us wager that some of the ideas of *Le Grand Puzzle* and *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles* will take root and blossom, thanks to catalyst organisations such as Marseille Solutions and Ouishare.

Let us hope that the citizens of Marseille will be left with some traces of the passage of this European Nomadic Biennial, starting with *Le Grand Puzzle*. Moreover, we hope that the experimental approach of Manifesta 13 Marseille, working alongside local artists and cultural organisations, will be welcomed with flying colours. Ultimately, the biennial confirms that contemporary creative art plays an essential role for all of us, providing substance and meaning to our daily lives. As a Marseillaise, I would like to thank the creative people of Manifesta, MVRDV and The Why Factory, Marseille Solutions, Ouishare, the ENSA and the ESDAMM for their commitment towards our city.















ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE FOR MARSEILLE: MANIFESTA 13 AND THE HYMN OF THE MARSEILLAIS.ES

HEDWIG FIJEN

FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF MANIFESTA

This essay was written before the world was faced with the coronavirus health crisis. During this time, I was personally affected and unable to work for more than two months. I would therefore like to sincerely thank all our colleagues, the artists, participants, the City of Marseille and everyone who has supported us in these difficult times, but especially all those who have performed essential jobs all over the world to fight this pandemic. Let's remember this heroic service and honour them with our dignity now and in the near future. We all hopefully realise that there is no higher or more critical priority than the safety of our fellow citizens. We are all connected as a society and it's time we recognise and honour that.

Life today seems to be increasingly unpredictable and the crisis-ridden global media discourses show the uncertain future threatened by disintegration, cultural polarisation, climate chaos, rising economic inequality and the impact of viral pandemics. Around the globe, citizens and public administrations are trapped in this shattering experience, as the world around us becomes increasingly fragmented due to the destruction of the ecologies and social bonds that have enabled humans, among other species, to live and thrive on this planet.

However, recent global protest movements resist the bewildering condition and discontent with the destruction of nature, culture and everything in-between. From global Extinction Rebellion and Black Lives Matter protests to the French Yellow Vest movement, a general sense of discontent and fear is being voiced by citizens. People are critical of the unsustainable growth-and-debt economy and are reviving a demand for cooperation and shared autonomy