NASRIN SERAJI

“NATURESTATION-PARC” - RIVE DES GAVES
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Back cover of the guide plan book showing the idea of an archipelago of sites in their territory.
Project Details

Architect / Urbanist / Designer
Nasrine Seraji + Atelier Seraji Architectes & Associés (ASAA)

Practice
ASAA

Title
Parc Naturel de La Gare - Rives des Gaves

Function
Landscape - Urban strategies for the city of Pau and its train station

Location
Pau, France

Client
Communauté D’agglomeration de Pau-Pyrenées

Practical Completion
2018

Funding Body
Communauté D’agglomeration de Pau-Pyrenées

Budget
N/A
Testing various scenarios exported to the site and imported from the existing programmes on the site

Area / Size
270 hectares

Contractor
N/A

Contributing Partners
TER Landscape Architects (2010-2012)
Y-Ingénierie (Engineering and Quantity surveyors)

² Testing various scenarios exported to the site and imported from the existing programmes on the site
Summary of the Work and its Significance, Originality, and Rigor

In 2009, the municipality of Pau Pyrenées launched a call for what is known as Études de definition, a preliminary study to define the limits of a future urban planning study. Five architect-urbanists were shortlisted, amongst them Manuel de Sola-Morales, the famous Spanish urbanist adhering to the urban thinking of Jaussely, Cerda, and Sert. The project called for a method of work and not necessarily an urban plan. All other competitors designed and filled the entire site, with road infrastructure as well as housing.

Our scheme, by contrast, critically questioned the utility of the urban
The site in its geographical context
master-plan model, and suggested that the site and zone of influence could not be treated in the same manner. As a result, we proposed a method for collectively drawing up a “guide plan” for the municipality of Pau and the four neighbouring towns. This was not an urban development plan, but a proposal that would allow subsequent urban plans of various complexities to be drawn up depending on land divisions, financing bodies and ecological landscape repairs. This method necessitated the production of a collective, communal budget as well as a clear collaboration between the five municipalities.

The Project has catalysed shifts in regional/governmental policies through new regulations for development of urban plans in flood plains. It has also
Le territoire comme échelle de projet

À gauche : des villes liées entre elles par l'infrastructure
À droite : des villes liées entre elles par le grand paysage / la géographie

Si la fin des années 1990 a marqué en France l'avènement du « projet urbain à la française » et par là même focalisé l'intérêt sur la question de la « forme » (de la forme urbaine à l'objet architectural), les enjeux liés au développement des territoires semblent depuis quelques années animer les débats et réveiller l'intérêt du grand public. Ce juste retour des choses ouvre à nouveau un champ de réflexion large où les enjeux d'échelle territoriale se conjuguent avec les probléma-
created a new set of regulations for the development of the site and its 650 hectares environs. These new regulations such as building heights, flood proof ground level programmes, and the spreading of water retention basins throughout the site allow rainwater absorption over a large surface.

Two books have also been commissioned on the project by the City of Pau, one by Jean Attali (philosopher) and the other by our studio.
Pau 2030: an atlas for tomorrow by Jean Attali

Naturestationpark of Rive des Gaves, guide plan book
LES PÉRIMÈTRES
I. LA GARE, CLÉ DE VOÛTE DU FUTUR PROJET

La gare, un lieu d’échanges dans le paysage

Avec une fréquentation de plus d’un million de voyageurs par an, la gare de Pau est la troisième gare d’Aquitaine et le premier générateur de déplacements de l’agglomération Pau-Pyrénées. Située au pied de la corniche du boulevard des Pyrénées, elle constitue une interface entre le centre historique de Pau et le territoire de la plaine des Gaves. Cette position, qui la place à l’épicentre de plusieurs communes (outre Pau, Bizanos, Mazères-Lezons, Gelos et Jurançon), fait d’elle une possible plaque tournante entre ces villes et le lieu privilégié du développement futur de l’agglomération.

La gare occupe une situation exceptionnelle dans un paysage idyllique. En arrivant par le train, la ville de Pau apparaît dès les quais comme une scène de théâtre, en contreplongée au-dessus des palmiers du glacis, témoins de la douceur du climat ; d’autre part, par-delà les rails, on découvre les étendues de la saligue et le Gave. D’un côté, se déploie un panorama raffiné sur une nature domestiquée ; de l’autre, s’ouvre un paysage sauvage, protégé et rare. Depuis le boulevard des Pyrénées, la toiture linéaire de la gare projette le regard vers les lointains, en contrepoint du grandiose paysage de la chaîne pyrénéenne.

Cette conjonction inédite encourage à penser la gare non seulement comme une unité fonctionnelle, mais encore comme un paysage pour la ville au quotidien. Elle suggère d’inscrire cet espace du paysage dans le programme même du quartier que la gare pourrait irriguer.
The station as a place of exchange in the landscape
The innovative character of this research lies in its critical analysis and prospective output. It has enabled the municipality of Pau and its environs to launch a gradual (incremental) development of the area with a “guide plan” that considers “time” as an essential ingredient for urbanism and urban value.

The project’s main goal and objectives were to through a new ecological method of urban development, bring five municipalities together around one main problem, and dissolve the differences of policies in order to create an agglomeration of multiple political forces in the region.

The method of analysis enabled us to assess three scales of urgencies in
Au pied du glacis
Hier : un lieu de plaisir
Aujourd'hui : un espace fonctionnel, imperméabilisé

Depuis la Paloumette
Hier : un lieu de production
Aujourd'hui : un lieu de loisirs

Les cascades
Hier : un lieu de loisirs
Aujourd'hui : un paysage altéré, sujet aux inondations
the project and establish 18 sites that were in danger of flooding/ pollution/ population shrinkage. We called this the “Archipelago of Intervention.”

The project, consequently this archipelago is situated in Pau, which lies on the southwestern border between France and Spain in the Pyrenean mountain range. The specific “bowl” geography of this area creates an almost “perfect” mild climate – soft, calm and without wind – contributing to our guide plan in the following manner:

Allowing large vast open spaces between buildings and the arrival of the station into a lush green park. Diversifying the plant types and introducing palm trees (green all year round) complementing the usual Ginko and Birch alignments trees.
 Hydrography: interventions in time

Hydrographie: interventions au fil du temps
18 pièces : matrice du territoire
Research Questions

• What are the possible types of living in a vast territory of 300 hectares? How can housing structure an urban plan?
• What is nature? What type of nature can this territory offer to its 5 communes? How can the guide plan over a period of 30 years guarantee the increase of natural resources such as forestry safeguarding the rare species present in the area adjacent to the Rive Gave?
• How can the station be integrated in its neighbouring park without damaging its flora and fauna? How can the station generate an eco-district through links to other modes of public transport?

Nota*: questions issues du cahier des charges
Les enjeux
- Impact du TCSP
- Proximité de la gare
- État d’aménagement (nationale, locale)
- État de la ville basse
- Proximité à la gare
- Accessibilité au site
- Bonaparte
- Territorialité du site

Les ouvertes
- Quelle ville ?
- Comment en ville ?
- Comment l’existant ?
- Relance des Gaves ?
- Quel nombre de habitants ?
- Développement de la population 2000 ?
- Quelle idée de ville ?
- Quels voisins ?
- Quel territoire (aménagement) ?
- Quelle gare ferroviaire ?
- Quelles gares ferroviaires ?
- Quel mode de transport ?
- pour le fret ?
- Pour le vélo route ?
- Routes du Gave ?
- Pour le centre bourg ?
- Pour le quartier ?

Quelle(s) forme(s) d’habiter ?

Quelle idée de nature(s) ?

Quel devenir pour la gare ?
Rigor

The project was a result of an International Ideas competition with applications from 60 firms. Three firms were selected to work on a preliminary programme planning for a multimodal city. After a year of analytical research each of the three firms submitted and presented their visions for the city in an hour-long conference. The five municipalities and the members of the jury (27) unanimously chose our project to be further developed. The jury had chosen a dynamic method of urban planning over a frozen design of a master plan that the municipality did not know how to fund neither immediately nor over time.

The vast 270-hectare area of this study required precise and rigorous
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<th>Surface</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Accessibilité</th>
<th>Degré de nuisance</th>
<th>Intégration collective</th>
<th>Fragmentation</th>
<th>Économie</th>
<th>Habitabilité</th>
<th>Pollution</th>
<th>Urgence</th>
<th>Fluide</th>
<th>Dégât de déstabilisation</th>
<th>Dégât de maîtrise</th>
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<td>1 Le bois Louis</td>
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<td>3 Le falcons</td>
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<td>12 Le centre commercial</td>
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<td>13 Les bêtes</td>
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<td>15 La plaine des sports</td>
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processes of observation and analysis, diagnosis of the nature of the ground, nature of the site pollution, history of the building types, and their relationship to possible new developments – One of the ways in which we have been able to contribute to the ecology of the site is to retain and convert the early 20th century industrial buildings into large new shared spaces for start-ups and an annex to the University of Pau – These intentions and strategies or methods allowed for the realization of a new “incremental urban plan”.

We used five methods of drawing and description:

• Comparative studies: through a collection of published postcards, we retroactively traced the visual history of the sites to construct the new prospective “future face” of the city.
The questionnarie for the first public workshop in June 2013

Remarques et questions à l’attention de l’Atelier Seraji (les feuilles seront collectées en fin de séance).

Remarques et questions à l’attention de l’Atelier Seraji (les feuilles seront collectées en fin de séance).

PARC NATUREL URBAIN

ATELIER DE CONCERTATION

03/06/2013

Quel équilibre entre protection et mise en valeur ?
Quelles ouvertures vers les communes ?
De quelle "durable" parle-t-on ?

QUARTIER À RENOUVELER

ATELIER DE CONCERTATION

04/06/2013

Quel avenir pour le passé industriel ?
Quelle stratégie programmatique ?
Quels types d’habitats pour quels modes de vie ?
• 26 Sectional drawings on very strategic sites to show how the sedimentation of the city through the first fortifications in the 12th century affected development.
• A lexical plan allowing 18 islands to be indexed on the archipelago plan to create a matrix of possibilities. *(See Fig n°10)* The addition of the islands created an archipelago of “programmatic potentials” (economic, typological, geographical, architectural etc.). This matrix was then presented to the five Mayors to be tested as possible ways to go forward.
• Axonometrics, isometrics, and graphic novels to allow ease of comprehension for those who have difficulty in reading plans and sections.
In an effort to introduce our design methods to the public, we organised three two-day workshops with local politicians, technicians, and members of the public. We recorded and synthesized the event into a publication with texts and drawings. The event also received local television coverage.
2 Le triangle de la gare
3 Le faisceau
7 La saligüe
18 La Paloumette
16 Le camping
15 La plaine dessports
17 La frange
8 Le remblai
14 Le hara
Index of 18 Islands on the Archipelago plan
Potential interventions across the entire site
Significance

The City of Pau was the subject of a development plan in the early 20th century by Léon Jaussely, the pioneer planner of large-scale zoning in France and Spain. His work was concentrated on relatively wealthy areas of the city, including the Boulevard des Pyrénées, which overlooks what was once known as the “lower” city. The project’s significance emerged from our re-engagement with this urban division, and the ways we could dissolve it by reintegrating the city’s lower sections into its upper sections through programming, planning, landscape, and temporary architectural interventions.

The intellectual agenda for this study/project suggests and demonstrates that urban planners need to integrate the
Leon Jaussely and his zoning plan for the city of Pau

The development of the city since the middle ages to today
element of time (4th dimension) through rigorous tested scenarios in all strategic planning models. The production of a “temporal guide plan” offers a useful model for architectural development—one that allows iterative changes to happen over time—as economical conditions after the 2008 financial crisis have proven to be a volatile element in urbanism and development.

The project has been exhibited at a range of venues and locations, including the city of Pau (2012-2015) and the National Urban Forum in Palais des Congrès (2012) in Paris. It has been reviewed in professional magazines such as Le Moniteur, AMC and the local newspapers over two mayoral mandates (6+4 years).
Dissemination and Evidence of Peer Review

The project since its inception has given rise to a variety of types of disseminations and two published books (see below).

Exhibitions/workshops (Selected):
2016
National Symposium on Landscape - Palais Beaumont, Pau, France
2015
Workshop on Rurality and Conservation, Songyang, China
2014
Workshop on Housing as urban matter, Saclay, France
2013
Workshop on Urban Developments and
Planning Strategies, Pau, France 
2012
Workshop on Urbanism and Tourism, 
Mashad, Iran 
2010
AZA First Architecture Biennale, 
Johannesburg, South Africa
Invited Lectures and peer reviewed papers (Selected):
2018
The Politics of Tradition, Architecture and its Discontent, Regeneration or the art of Retention, IASTE (International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments) conference and peer reviewed paper, Coimbra, Portugal
Cities of the Past, cities of the future and the predicament of the countryside, Urban planning Bureau of Shenzhen
Keynote lecture, Cities and their waterfronts, Perspective magazine, HK
2017
What is Radicality today? Conservation or Regeneration!, City University of Macau
Architecture and its Discontent, Regeneration or the art of Retention, Docomomo, Macau
THE POLITICS OF TRADITION

OCTOBER 4-7, 2018 / UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA / COIMBRA, PORTUGAL

ARCHITECTURE AND ITS DISCONTENT
REGENERATION or the art of retention
Keynote lecture, Reality Leaves a Lot to the Imagination, Singapore ArchiFest Docomomo Macau/HK, Architecture and Its Discontent: Regeneration or the Art of Retention
2016
Keynote speaker at the symposium “Isfahan: The World City of the 17th century,” Isfahan Cultural Centre
Keynote speaker How Soon is Now? Australian Institute of Architects National Architecture Conference, Adelaide
Le Paysage dans le projet urbain (landscape: a planning tool), Pau, France
2015
Closing Lecture, in the series “Good Life”, Platforms a new infrastructure for living, The Berlage, Delft, The Netherlands
1000 Singapores: Model of a Compact City, Symposium at the Cité de
An annual public festival for Singapore to celebrate architecture and the built environment. "Building Agency" emphasizes the facilitating and building (v.) up of agency and citizen participation through architecture. It foregrounds the agency of buildings (n.) as important materials and spaces of urban life. It is about an empowerment of the people as active agents in the making of our built environment.

It will build upon the five pillars of the festival: Archi-Interfaces, SIA Conference, Conversations, Workshops, Open Studios and ArchiTours.
l’Architecture, Paris
Architecture and Its Double: Practicing Architecture and Its Education, Ryerson University, Toronto
2014
Magazines, lectures, and symposia: a new public space in Iran, Cité de l’Architecture, Paris
2013
In Praise of Cities: Development without Urbanisation, Lecture tour in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong
Future Cities: Dreams, Nightmares or Opportunities for a New Operating System. MIT, USA
Architecture and Its Double (the City), Université de Montréal, Canada
What Ever Happened to the Garden City?, Le Rheu, France
Espaces partagés, Utopies et nécessités, Bayonne, France
WHERE DO YOU STAND
99TH ACSA ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 3-6, 2011 | MONTRÉAL, CANADA
HILTON MONTRÉAL BONAVENTURE

CO-CHAIRS
ALBERTO PÉREZ-GÓMEZ
MCGILL UNIVERSITY
ANNE CORMIER
UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL
ANNIE PEDRET
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO

THEME
The New York Times architecture critic Nicola Usu-
sof has described Toyo Ito’s work as the “next step
on the evolutionary chain,” calling out Ito’s belief that
to create a human architecture it “must somehow
embrace seemingly contradictory values.” Ousrusef
suggests that “instead of a self-contained utopia, Ito
offers us multiple dreams,” embraces ambiguity, is in-
terested in the realm of the “in between,” and “forces
us to look at the world through a wider lens.” Ito, like
many architects who came to prominence in the past
decade, aims to expand possibilities and, in doing so,
to make room for a wider range of human experience.

This demand for a wider agenda for modern architec-
ture, introduced to the discipline in the 1950’s and
followed by Postmodernism’s demands for greater
diversity, has left the discipline open—wide open—
perhaps too open. Free from the universalist, utopian
confines of Modernism, and working in an intellectual
context that embraces a more complex conception of
contemporary reality, architects are now not only free,
but required to interpret and, indeed, choose their po-
sition relative to this expanded field. With such choice
comes the responsibility to ask: Where Do You Stand?

INVITED KEYNOTES

NASRINE SERAJ
ATÉLIER SERAJ
ARCHITECTES & ASSOCIÉS

DAVID ADJAYE
ADJAYE ASSOCIATES

TOURS
THURSDAY: OLD PORT/OLD MONTRÉAL
FRIDAY MORNING: QUARTIER INTERNATIONAL DE MONTRÉAL
FRIDAY AFTERNOON: QUARTIER DES SPECTACLES
SATURDAY MORNING: DOWNTOWN MONTRÉAL IN THE 1960’S
SATURDAY AFTERNOON: POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE TO MONTRÉAL
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
SUNDAY MORNING: MONTRÉAL IN THE 1960’S:
HABITAT TO WESTMOUNT SQUARE

EXHIBITS
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING AN EXHIBITOR AT THE ANNUAL
MEETING? CONTACT MARY LOU BAILY, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
(MLBAILEY@ACSA-ARCH.ORG) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

FOR MORE
INFORMATION
VISIT US AT
ACSA-ARCH.ORG

47
2012
Keynote Lecture, Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture
Keynote Lecture, Workshop on Urbanism and Tourism, Mashad, Iran

2011
Keynote Lecture, 99th ACSA Annual meeting, Montreal, Canada
Rem Koolhaas and His Relationship to Writing, Architecture, Urbanism, Tehran, Iran

2010
From Generic to Specific: The Case of China, Shanghai, China
Toward a Well-Tempered Urbanism: An Urbanism of Situations, Montreal, Canada
Critical Practice – Practicing Research, Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna

2009
Towards a Well-Tempered Architecture, Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment (CSTB), Paris
Beauty and the Eye of the Beholder, Dubai
2008
Metropolitan Garden City, Monterey, California
Toward a Well-Tempered Urbanism: An Urbanism of Situations, Penang, Malaysia
Bibliography


Appendix

Related publications by the designer:


Books, journals, and references to the project written by others:


The first public conference in presence of the mayor of Pau and the public
Scenarios of different uses on various sections of the site
A view from the lower city toward the constituted upper city
A view from Boulevard des Pyrénées on the lower city toward the mountains of Pyrénées and Spain
The integrated landscape parking, housing, and skate park - integrating two neighbouring communes into one.
The Department of Architecture educates students in an active culture of service, scholarship and invention. Uniquely situated at the crossroads of China and global influence, the Department takes the approach that design is best explored from a sophisticated understanding of both. With a multidisciplinary curriculum emphasizing technology, history and culture, students gain broad knowledge and skills in the management of the environmental, social, and aesthetic challenges of contemporary architectural practice. With opportunities for design workshops, international exchanges, and study travel, graduates of the Department of Architecture are well prepared for contribution to both international and local communities of architects and designers.