

de NEW BABYLON

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NEW BABYLON the world of HOMO LUDENS

The world of plenty is New Babylon, the world in which man no longer toils, but plays; poetry as a way of life for the masses, „la poésie faite par tous et non par un". New Babylon, perhaps, is not so much a picture of the future as a Leitmotiv, the conception of an all-comprehensive culture which is hard to comprehend because until now it could not exist, a culture which, for the first time in history, as a consequence of the automation of Labour, becomes feasible although we do not yet know what shape it will take, and seems mysterious to us. Will man of the future be able to play his life? Will he be able to lead a life without the necessity to earn his daily bread in toil and sweat? The answer to these questions entails the condemnation of a moral which still regards labour which can be performed by a machine as the fulfillment of man's life and promises him a fictional paradise as a reward after his death.

When one occupies oneself with New Babylon everything else seems to have become unimportant. Yet the time has not yet come to give a conclusive answer to all the questions which present themselves. This is the dilemma of creative man to-day: yesterday's world has come to an end, the world of to-morrow is still dim in outline. By necessity he continues to be the vague designer, the semi-player. He only suggests whereas he would like to play, he plays whereas he would like to give shape, he outlines only whereas he would like to be precise. But his outlines of the new world to come are important in that at last he deliberately turns away from the utilitarian world in which creativeness was only an escape and a protest, and that he becomes the interpreter of the new man, homo ludens.

Constant

(Constant New-Babylon drawings, 1961-1962
Galerie Delta, Rotterdam 1963).



Constant - Notes biographiques



Constant est né à l'étage supérieur d'une maison de la Celesbesstraat à Amsterdam le soir du mercredi 21 juillet 1920. A cette époque, la gare de Muiderpoort se trouvait juste en face de la maison. Pendant les dix années où Constant y habita, il resta en étroit contact visuel avec la roue, en l'occurrence l'infatigable et rapide roue du train. Le motif de la roue revient sans cesse dans ses peintures COBRA („l'animal sorcier", 1949, Musée d'Art moderne, Paris; „terre calcinée", 1951, Musée Municipal, Amsterdam; „terre calcinée", 1952, Musée d'Art contemporain, Vienne). Lorsqu'il se consacra plus tard aux constructions à trois dimensions, le motif de la roue y occupa encore une place remarquable (groupe de roues en aluminium 1956-1958). Constant fréquenta le lycée de sa ville natale. Puis il suivit pendant quelque temps les cours de l'Ecole des Arts appliqués d'Amsterdam, après quoi il fit ses études à l'Académie des Beaux-Arts. En 1940 il s'établit à Bergen (Hollande septentrionale), qu'il dut cependant bientôt quitter du fait de la guerre. Il n'y revint qu'en 1945, mais cette fois encore pour peu de temps, et s'établit de nouveau à Amsterdam en 1946. La même année, il vient pour la première fois à Paris où il fait la connaissance du peintre danois Asger Jorn. Ils font ensemble des plans pour une nouvelle organisation internationale pour artistes. Au début de 1948, Appel et Corneille rendent visite à Constant, car ils ont entendu parler de son travail. Il les entraîne à faire leurs idées, qu'il avait déjà consignées dans un manifeste. Le juillet 1948, le „groupe expérimental" est créé par Constant, Corneille, Appel, Rooskens, Jan Nieuwenhuys, Wolvecamp et Brands. Le „manifeste pour le groupe expérimental", écrit par Constant, est publié dans le périodique

du groupe, „Reflex" no. 1. Constant, Appel et Corneille participent, comme représentants du groupe, à une conférence du „centre de documentation sur l'art d'avant-garde", à Paris, organisée par le „groupe du surréalisme révolutionnaire", comptant entre autre Dotremont, Jaguer, Noël Arnaud et Passeron. A cette conférence, Constant, Appel, Corneille, Dotremont et Jorn se séparent des autres participants et créent l'organisation internationale COBRA (Copenhague, Bruxelles, Amsterdam). Constant est le rédacteur du périodique „Cobra" jusqu'en 1950. Cette même année il vient à Paris pour un plus long séjour. Il y habite pendant deux ans, 57, rue Pigalle. C'est l'époque de ses peintures sur la guerre. Dans cette série, le motif de la roue réapparaît clairement. C'est une roue tordue, cassée, symbole de la destruction. De 1952 à 1953, il vit à Londres, où il consacre le plus clair de son temps à de grandes randonnées à travers la ville. A cette époque son travail devient plus simple, plus abstrait; il s'éloigne lentement de la peinture. Après son retour à Amsterdam en 1953, il s'intéresse de plus en plus aux problèmes de l'espace. En collaboration avec Aldo van Eyck, il publie en 1953 „Pour un colorisme spatial". Il étudie l'architecture et réalise ses premières constructions. Pendant l'hiver 1956, Constant séjourne dans la petite cité d'Alba, en Italie. Il y rencontre le peintre Pinot Gallizio, qui y possède un petit terrain. Sur ce terrain quelques familles de gitans campent dans des conditions très primitives. Sur la proposition de Gallizio, Constant ébauche un projet de camp permanent de gitans qui, par un système de cloisons mobiles sous une seule toiture, peut toujours modifier son aménagement intérieur et s'adapter au nombre d'habitants. Cela le conduit à une série de maquettes

de New Babylon, la cité des nomades. A la même époque, il fait la connaissance de G. E. Debord. Leur contact conduit à une définition de la notion „d'urbanisme unitaire", que l'on trouve dans la „déclaration d'Amsterdam" (1958), publiée dans le numéro 2 d'„Internationale situationniste", dont Constant fut quelque temps rédacteur. Cette déclaration note en particulier:
● La possibilité d'une création unitaire et collective est déjà annoncé par la décomposition des arts individuels. L'I.S. ne peut couvrir aucun essai de rénovation de ces arts.
● Le programme minimum de l'I.S. est l'expérience de décors complets qui devra s'étendre à un urbanisme unitaire, et la recherche d'un nouveau comportement en relation avec ces décors.
Cette „déclaration d'Amsterdam" ouvre à Constant la voie vers une toute nouvelle activité, vers une collaboration artistique pratique, vers une matérialisation. Le refus ou l'incapacité des situationnistes de le suivre dans cette activité conduit à une rupture en 1960. Depuis 1959 Constant se consacre principalement à l'étude du thème de New Babylon, dont les premières publications paraissent encore dans les numéros 3 et 4 d'„Internationale situationniste". New Babylon est la théorie d'une nouvelle culture qui naît, insistant sur un pouvoir créateur collectif. Le germe de ces théories se trouvait déjà dans le manifeste et dans les articles que Constant écrivit pour le groupe Cobra. Constant s'attache ces dernières années à propager ces idées et à développer plus avant les plans pour une culture de l'avenir. Vit en travaille à Amsterdam, Henri Polaklaan 25.

Victor E. Nieuwenhuys

WE ASKED THE DUTCH POET SIMON VINKENOOG TO WRITE AN ESSAY ON LIFE IN NEW-BABYLON. IN A POETICAL TEXT HE GAVE US HIS PERSONAL, IDEALISTIC VISION ON THIS SOCIETY OF THE FUTURE.

NEW BABYLON, Here and Now From All to One

Another day in New Babylon. The first of all days. New names, new meanings, new sounds — every day a completely fresh world to be discovered; the universe one joyous cosmology.

The nearest world nearer than ever, cosmic jumps projected in space and time — reconnoitering the farther distances is a constant adventure in the chemistry of the liberated mind.

DIRECTIVES FOR THE MOMENT:

Look with your hands. Feel with your eyes. Hear with your nose. Smell with your tongue and Taste with your ears. Think with your intestines. Live with your body. Know with everything.

No frontiers, only territories. No enemies (the world is meaningless since the New Era), only brothers. Open stretches in

New Babylon; man freed into himself, a revolutionary step forward toward perfection, in his own image.

MOVE INTO THE NOW

Now. Experience, undergo, act, don't look back, live towards the future. Make room for all knowledge, all abilities, all the millions of suns whose energies have not yet been used, the untold forces that lie within you, still to be unleashed.

All the images of the past focussed into one reality, in the course of a few decennia Man having understood the secret of himself, sharing the earth with all other human beings.

The 20th Century avant-garde artist refused the choice between the ivory tower life-sentence, and the other status of commercial slavery.

New Babylon, having prepared itself in years of an underground existence resisted all the oppressions, created by a society which had lost its primary regenerating aims.

New Babylon sprang up, into the open and available areas of human consciousness, as part of a greater game of liberation, self-knowledge and accelerated human development. When Man discovered that the choice concerning life and death could be his own, he refused to concede to commands of extinction which had left an unforgettable sting in his mind, and found out that the world was in a leprous, untenable and insane situation. It was like a man standing in front of a mirror, holding a gun at his temple, and shouting at his image: „Watch out or I'll shoot!"

Man started communicating to help drive danger from his home, his mind,

his life. He could see and understand why people gathered: like animals, panicked and destructive, in baiting-crowds and flight-crowds: persecutions and pogroms, lynchings and witch-hunts. The inheritance Man left behind: Man of the electronic age. He created strikes and disobediences: prohibition-crowds staged sit-ins, play-ins, live-ins; Squatters took over from Inhabitants, and the computers replaced civil servants. Man was no longer a servant, but a master; of himself, and of the power within him waiting to be awakened.

„Dear Friend, the wolves have always eaten the sheep; are the sheep going to eat the wolves this time? This sentence, which comes from a letter which Madame Julien wrote to her son during the French revolution, contains the essence of Reversal", writes Elias Canetti in his study „Crowds and Power" (Londen, 1962), and he continues his prophecy with: „So far a few wolves have held down many sheep. Now the time has come for the many sheep to turn against the few wolves. Their numbers have to make up for the experience in viciousness which they lack."

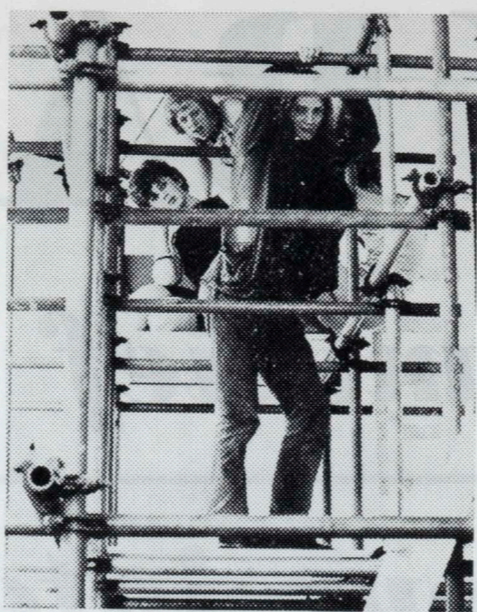
LIVING IS PLAYING A GAME

BUILDING IS LIVING

Miracles are discovered, worlds become true, inventions undone, the rules forgotten, nothing is sure and not even that. A new equilibrium is coming about, new limbs, new senses, functional machines devoid of machinery, apparatuses without demonstrable use, good and beautiful, true and certain.

People all over the world discovered too, that all frontiers and separations, barriers and divisions were artificial, that communication is best effected and implemented on the horizontal level; the Age of Command (from one man called „superior" to another man called „inferior") was over, at the same time when thrift overflowed scarcity, and machines started producing what

Man had until then been unable to produce: democracy, equality, liberty and love. Youth took over in this new society, forming feast-crowds, outflanking history's remnant left-overs. Refusing to play outdated games, their creative power bounced upon the rigid classifications of the economy state, and their youthful vigor



played pied piper to their expectant contemporaries.

Bob Dylan singing: „The Times they are a-changin'" and the Kinks are „Dancing in the Streets!" and „Turn on Your Lovelight!" — Them playing: „We've got to get out of this place" — The Animals warning: „It's My Generation!" — The Who shouting; Donovan: „Trying for the Sun"; „Think for Yourself". The Beatles are setting an example. Preparing for the take-off, the drop-outs and purposeful collaborators spread the word, taking with themselves, wherever they went, the newness of a sun never setting.

The world a living theater; just players, no more idle spectators.

Those psychologists, sociologists and politicians, who didn't understand the new insurrectional revolt, nor could explain its sudden imperative exigency: Love, or else! found themselves suddenly devoid of their familiar frame of references.

Creativity then, in those Last Days, could only be a violation of the automated reality, which did not leave space for game and adventure, or beauty and sensory saturation.

Where did all the Nomads come from? All of a sudden they filled the cities and its suburbs: the long-haired,

guitar-playing, rocking and stomping rebellious troubadours, spreading joy and paving the way for those who still were left behind at the conveyor-belts and lathes. The entrances to the gates of Eden were no longer closed off from reality, when Paradise became an imminent promise. No more lost secrets to be found, but the living heritage of Man to be shared by all.

Roman was smiling as thoughts of the visualized information he would impart to his young friends that day began to materialize in his awakening moments. Fifteen of them, from all over New Babylon, had dropped in at his Educational Exchange Center these past weeks. He was glad that by now the preliminary courtesies had been exchanged and that to-day he could start his labor of pleasure, the monitoring of these eager young boys and girls, who had decided that they wanted to be taught the greater games of life, at Roman's Center.

He smiled, his thoughts returning to those Last Days, so meaningful in his father's remembrances. Often he watched him reborn as a challenging child in a world full of

wondrously new changes, telling him about those days past. And how well he liked the exchanges with these young friends of his, who even now were making this world so much greater!

EXERCISES

Give a definition of life. Abandon yourself to the game. Play a part. Play tricks. Let it happen now. Prepare yourself.

How many discoveries were still waiting ahead. Hadn't a new layer of stratospheric energy-fields been opened up recently to an amazed world-population, estatically connected within the World Sensorium?

Multi-dimensional communication levels, linking Man into a living and evolving conscious individual, had made new contacts with even more promising joys than those already fulfilled. Quickly the new knowledge would be shared by all, the youngest would be the first to grasp the many-fold implications, and Roman would share in their understanding.

He turned off the layer of Night-Heat which still permeated the living-space he occupied these days, and gazed into the distance. His biorhythms were determined experientially, since first he had installed his Life-Sphere in this part of New Babylon:

light glittering everywhere, in the far winds you could hear the organ-like whinings of fast travel through the air-shafts. The recently completed forest of pre-historic trees waved gently in ultra-violet light groupings. A synthetic rainbow protected this sector, a sign for visitors from afar, to be decoded the nearer they approached: Children's Areas! Playgrounds! Educational Exchange Centers! Information Relays! Space-Time Provisions! Stereo-Reminiscences! Sigmatic and Semantic Syntax!

Once again Roman saw it all, as clearly and distinctly as if it were written or projected on the many-colored sky-screen.

His mind mirrored the naked human form divine, as William Blake had described it, whose senses and central nervous system had now linked humanity into one great Being: New Babylon, city of Homo Ludens, free earth for the happy.

Man, stripped to his essence, was now the ultimate and perfect embodiment of countless interconnected and interrelated cells, forming organs, functioning at the highest level of maximum efficiency. Man had learned the ground rules: „Trust your inherent machinery. Be entertained by the social game you play. Remember, man's natural state is ecstatic wonder, ecstatic intuition, ecstatic accurate movement. Don't settle for less."

No more nightmares, nuclear energy gives breathing-space for everyone.

No collective suffocation, but collective creation. Creation, recreation, and living in the name of love.

One man's suffering everybody's pain.

One man's discoveries everybody's salvation, strength, confidence, joy. So many friends on this road, so many new departures.

You are there, too, aren't you? Look around you, broaden your outlook. There is but one future for all. New Babylon is in the making, for you too. Wherever you are. Relax, release. Think. Act. Join.

Take a walk. This world is now and for ever. A homage to Constant. Simon Vinkenoog



VAN

ANARCHITECTUUR

TOT

U.S.-R.

New Babylon is het toekomstproject van de toekomst. Dat heeft Constant zelf gezegd.

Men zou de indruk kunnen krijgen dat dit ook betekent, dat er een vacuum zit tussen het heden van Constant en zijn grote project New Babylon. En dat is niet waar.

In de tekst die ik geschreven heb voor de eerste New Babylon-informatief (maastricht, juli 1965) heb ik beschreven hoe duidelijk de kiem van New Babylon al te onderscheiden was in Constant's schilderijen van ongeveer negen jaar vóór dat hij feitelijk met zijn werk voor de modellen en de beschrijvende schets van de nederzetting New Babylon begon, in 1958.

Dit opstel wil erop wijzen dat van het leven, dat men zich kan voorstellen in de nederzetting New Babylon, al iets te onderscheiden is in de dagelijkse omgeving van Constant

Er is dan dus geen vacuum tussen het heden van Constant en zijn grote project New Babylon; New Babylon is dan ook niet het toekomstproject van de toekomst, maar New Babylon als schets van een cultuur is aan haar werkelijk bestaan begonnen.

Is de afstand tussen heden en de toekomst van de toekomst evenzeer werkelijkheid, dan is daarmee het heden veel eerder terug geschoven naar een verleden. De sociaal-critische houding van Constant

schijnt deze verhouding in de schaal van heden en toekomst als de juiste te ondersteunen.

In het korte bestek van dit opstel wil ik pogen hiervoor een illustratie te schetsen.

Aan Constant was in 1965 het verzoek gericht om op enigerlei wijze deel te nemen aan een tentoonstelling in het Stedelijk Museum te Amsterdam.

Deze tentoonstelling was een manifestatie van de Stichting Nieuw Beelden. Hij had reeds geweigerd, omdat hij eigenlijk niet individueel wilde meewerken aan de opzet van deze tentoonstelling. Hij wilde daar niet als het genie figuren; „het genie is ondenkbaar geworden — de individuele

kunsten lossen zich op, „teamwork" en andere vormen van samenwerking gaan het beeld van de cultuur beheersen"

Wij besloten samen toch een werkstuk te maken voor de bedoelde expositie en dit kwam tot stand onder het kritische motto „een anarchitectuur"; vervolgens kreeg het werkstuk de theoretische benaming „bestaanscontrole omloop" en onder de naam „ambiance de jeu" werd het later gepubliceerd in „Provo" nr. 4. Het bouwwerk dat tot stand kwam, was niet alleen het resultaat van collectieve creativiteit op kleine schaal, maar het accent van collectieve creativiteit werd beslist vergroot door het gebruik dat gemaakt werd van het bouwwerk en de aard van

de verschillende toegepaste namen. Deze „anarchitectuur”, ook nog V2-omgang genoemd, werd geprolongeerd in het Gemeente Museum te Den Haag in oktober 1965.

In 1965 logeerde ik vrij regelmatig bij Constant en had ik de gelegenheid zijn levenswijze gade te slaan en mee te beleven. De eerste typische trek waarvan ik nota nam, was wel het zeer onconventionele gebruik van het huis. New Babylon was hier beslist niet buitenshuis. Het meer dan nuttig hoge woon-werk-en-slaap vertrek werd gedeeld met een wolaap, een hond en twee papegaaien. De tafel had er geen vaste plaats, evenmin als de tekentafel. Nergens was een vaste hoek als zit, en een van de belangrijkste elementen van het vertrek was de deur die deel uit maakte van een groep van ongeveer tien soortgenoten die de oriëntatie van de bezoekers steeds op de proef stelde. Ofschoon het huis waarvan Constant de begane grond bewoont een typisch huis is uit het eind van de vorige eeuw en de omgeving van het huis van de Diamantbewerkerbond tot en met de ingang van Artis en de naam van de straat toe, de sfeer sterk tekent en dit niet op een wijze die a priori tegenovergesteld is aan de sfeer van Constant's gedachten, tekenen de dagelijkse bewegingen van hem en van zijn huisgenoten een patroon dat grote overeenkomst vertoont met de speelmodellen die hij maakte als illustraties en parallellen van zijn geschreven schets voor een cultuur, „New Babylon, skizze zu einer Kultur”. De aanblik van zijn interieur is hard en zonder enige trek van welke interieurkunst dan ook, maar heeft kwaliteit van omgeving, ambientie. De mogelijkheden die in het woord anarchitectuur zitten zijn hier toepasselijk in de vorm van an-architectuur.

Aan de geschreven cultuurschets, die New Babylon heet, ligt een documentatie ten grondslag die van grote betekenis is in de tussenfase tussen het ondergaande individualisme en het opkomende collectivisme.

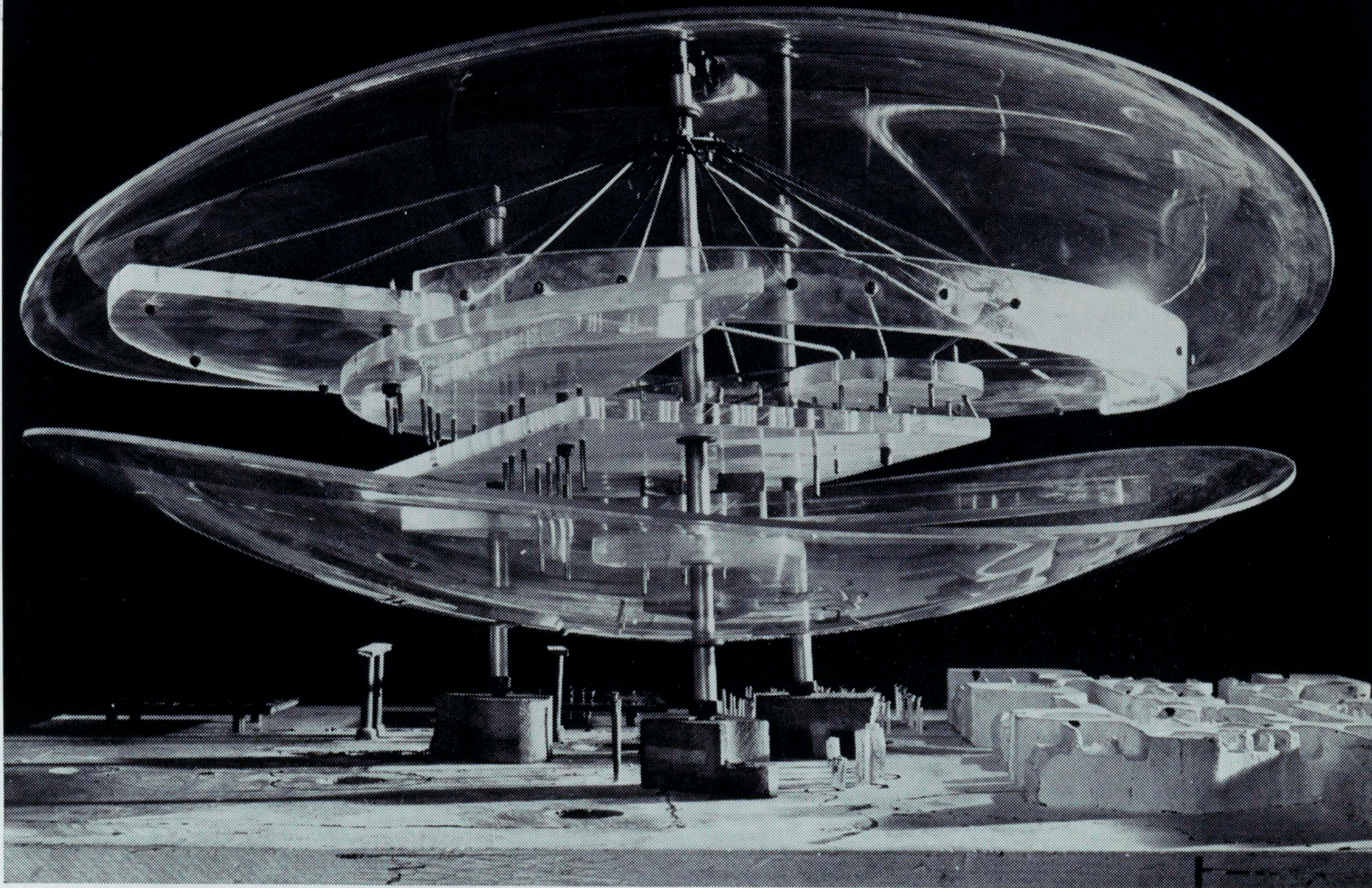
In de „New Babylon informatief” nr. 2, verschenen in Den Haag, oktober 1965, is de mededeling verschenen dat er een coöperatie tussen verschillende privé documentaties tot stand was gekomen. Die documentaties bevatten speciaal gegevens die van betekenis zijn voor de wordende vorm van de socio-ruimte. Het patroon van de samenwerking zet de lijnen van de plattegrond van New Babylon voort buiten de woning van Constant. Toen de anarchitectuur, de „bestaanscontrole omloop”, aanleiding werd om te Rotterdam een experimentele ruimte in te richten, was het vanzelfsprekend dat ergens in deze ruimte ook een documentatiekamer tot stand zou komen. Even vanzelfsprekend zou die voortkomen uit de „doc-coöp”, de documentatie coöperatie. Door grotere samenwerking en uitgebreidere collectieve creativiteit kwam de E.S.-R., de Experimentele Studio Rotterdam tot stand in het voorjaar van 1965. Ofschoon deze studio niet vergeleken moet worden met New Babylon — hetgeen ook niet kan omdat er een aantal elementaire structuren bij behoren die nog niet tot stand gekomen zijn in de samenleving — is het geheel de vorm geworden van een anarchitectuur; een bouwwerk dat uit collectieve creativiteit tot stand gekomen is en waaraan een kritische houding ten opzichte van het bestaande bouwen ten grondslag ligt.

De autoriteit van het functionalisme is er aangevochten. De tien deuren uit de gang van Constants woning staan er opgesteld in de orde van een labyrint!

Bij de inrichting van de documentatiekamer van de E.S.-R. te Rotterdam (in het Bouwcentrum) bleek de belangstelling van buiten af voor het betreffende materiaal, zowel als ook de vraag naar lezingen en geschriften zo groot en bleek ook de samenwerking tussen verschillende documentaties zo gewenst, dat het initiatief genomen werd om ook de „doc-coöp” in een groter schema op te nemen. Dit leidde tot de oprichting van de U.S.-R., de Universiteit van de Socio-Ruimte. Dit instituut zal documentaties omvatten en experimentele studio's en zal een registratie bijhouden van de groei van het patroon waarop het nieuwe cultuurbeeld zich beweegt. Eenmaal per jaar zal de U.S.-R. een openbare zitting houden.

Deze werkelijkheid vult het vacuüm tussen het heden en de toekomst van de toekomst. De ontwikkelingslijn van de Anarchitectuur tot de U.S.-R. heeft de voorbereiding van New Babylon op ware grootte gebracht. En dat is alvast een beweging volledig volgens het gegeven, dat New Babylon tot stand zal worden gebracht door de New Babyloniers zelf; de universele samenwerking die ook voorwaarde is voor het collectivisme, de periode van synthese.

De Universiteit van Socio-Ruimte zal in de tussenfase van de experimentele periode naar de tijd van het collectivisme niet alleen alle lezingen en tentoonstellingen en publicaties registreren, maar ook op de jaarlijkse dag van de U.S.-R. aan personen die aan de verbreiding van dit cultuurbeeld werken, de titel *syntheticus* toekennen. Nic. H. M. Tummers



New Babylon - a proposition

Since the beginning of this century there has been constant discussion about the creative faculties of the human race, and more than one *avant-garde* movement has declared itself in favour of a *poésie faite par tous*. The realization of such a mass-culture does obviously not depend on the intentions of artists only, and would demand thorough changes within society.

If this is so, we can begin to understand the critical situation the artists have come into since the industrial revolution.

The effects of machine-production are leading slowly to a reduction in human labour, and we can state already with certainty, that we will enter a new era, in which production labour will be automatic. For the first time in history, mankind will be able to establish an affluent society in which nobody will have to waste his forces, and in which everybody will be able to use his entire energy for the development of his creative capacities.

We can already say that there is no repeatable action that theoretically cannot be done by machine. The only activity that will remain beyond automation is the unique act of the imagination by which a human being is distinguished. The only field of activity unaccessible for the computer is the unforeseeable creativity that makes man change the world and reshape it after his capricious needs.

There can be no doubt about the progressing of mankind towards this prospect. No force on earth can possibly prevent humanity from seizing the affluence of automatic production that will enable man to live a creative life instead of being merely an instrument of production.

The question is, how the free man of the future will use his unlimited energies. It is clear that no comparison can be made to the artist of the past or of the present. The *homo ludens* of the past, like Johan Huizinga described him, was a man in an exceptional situation, a man who escaped reality in substituting another dreamed „reality” that should help him to forget the unsatisfying circumstances of his actual life. No real contact was possible between him and the others who could not follow him into his substitute reality, being confined themselves in utilitarian lives. His thoughts and his morals had to be different from the normal, and even when society recognized him, he remained a lonely man, sometimes an outcast. The new *homo ludens* of the future on the contrary, will rather be the normal type of man.

His life will consist in constructing the reality he wants, in creating the world he conceives freely, no longer bothered by the struggle for life. We will see that this means a complete revolution in the field of social behaviour. If man is no longer bound to production-labour, he also will no longer be forced to stick to a fixed place, to settle down. He will be able to circulate, to change his environment, to enlarge his area. His relationship to space will become as free as his relationship to time is already becoming now.

The *homo ludens* of the future society will not have to make art for he can be creative in the practice of his daily life. He will be able to create life itself and to shape it in correspondence with still unknown needs that will emerge only after he has obtained complete freedom. New Babylon represents the environment the *homo ludens* is supposed to live in. For it should be clear that the functional cities that have been erected during the long period of history in which human lives were consecrated to utility, would by no means suit the totally different needs of the creative race of the *homo ludens*.

The environment of the *homo ludens* has, first of all, to be flexible, changeable, assuring any movement, any change of place or change of mood, and any mode of behaviour.

It follows that New Babylon could not be a determined plan. On the contrary, every element would be left undetermined, mobile and flexible. For the people circulating in this enormous social space are expected to give the space its everchanging shape; to divide it, to vary it, to create its different atmospheres, and to play their lives in a variety of surroundings.

There are two connected circumstances that have caused, especially in the past ten years, a critical situation in the highly industrialized countries. The first and most important is an increase of population that is leading to an almost complete urbanization of the landscape, destroying the land that originally was used in common. The other circumstance, related to this, is the growing importance of mechanical traffic that enlarges enormously the living space of each individual. These developments represent a new social situation no one can deny. The facts are simply there as a reality, and we have to deal with them. But we cannot allow traffic to destroy the social space of the cities, like it is doing now, and we cannot let the population growth be responsible for changing all landscape into one uninterrupted townscape, boring and dead, without any possibility for creating a more interesting way of living.

Every plan for the future that is as free as the New Babylon project, has to solve the problems that are posed by these circumstances, and any failure in solving them may be considered as an attack against the freedom of life. The urbanization consists of a coherent system of covered unities that I call sectors, and in between remain extensive open green spaces where nobody lives and where no buildings are to be found. This network-like system is unlimited, and could, theoretically, cover the entire surface of the earth. Because of the intensified use that is made of space, this means that the field of activity of each individual has practically no limits.

The sector itself — whose dimensions are much bigger than those of any present building — is a spatial system of levels, that leave the groundlevel free for an intensive fast traffic. On top of it there may be airports or heliports to assure the quick passage to sector-groups in other parts of the world.

The sector-floors are primarily empty. They represent a sort of extension of the earth-surface, a new skin that covers the earth and multiplies its living space.

The unfunctional character of this playgroundlike construction makes any logical division of the inner spaces senseless. We rather should think of a quite chaotic arrangement of smaller and bigger spaces that are constantly mounted and dismounted by means of standardized mobile construction-elements, like walls, floors and staircases. Thus the social space can be adapted to the ever-changing needs of an ever-changing population that is passing the sector-system.

There would be no question of any fixed life pattern, for life itself would be as a creative material. The unfunctional and fantastic way of living would demand the rapid passage from one place to another, from sector to sector, and life in New-Babylon would be essentially nomadic. In New Babylon people would be constantly travelling. There would be no need for them to return to their point of departure as this in any case would be transformed. Therefore each sector would contain private rooms, (a hotel) where people would spend the night or rest for awhile.

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