

THE OFFICE

LIST is a Paris based Architecture, Urban Planning and Research office. The practice was founded in 2012, by Ido Avissar.

LIST develops an approach that conciliates professional practice and research, which aims to position itself between disciplines (architecture, urbanism, landscape and planning) rather than within a set framework. This desire comes from the observation that today, many spatial and societal questions manifest themselves in various ways and on different scales. Tackling these issues and their interrelationships on diverse scales and in a cross-disciplinary way, constitutes a great asset and a fertile design framework for the office. The practice is therefore a close group of 3 to 5 architects and urbanists, who are regularly joined by specific and complementary competences. This arrangement provides the office with the flexibility and liveliness it needs to apprehend diverse issues the right way. Thus, our projects concern just as well territorial scales (Spatial Policy Plan of Flanders - BRV) as they do metropolitan scales (PAV-Carrefour de l'Etoile in Geneva; strategic study around the train station in Tourcoing); they are just as much architectural (Frans Masereel Art Centre in Flanders) as they are landscaped (Metropolitan Landscapes, Brussels), as prospective (IMR-iconographical) as they are operational (Sport Park, Genk).

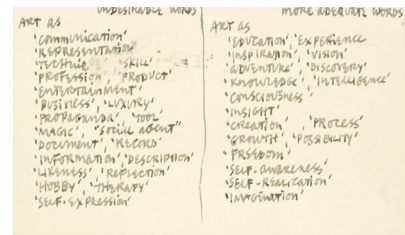
The office's practice is resolutely turned towards European territories. These territories' diversity, openness and accessibility, seem to outline a true, contemporary and coherent project environment. We consequently work in France, in Belgium and in Switzerland, with Italian, Dutch and Flemish offices and experts from diverse nationalities. This constellation of territories and associates – that we are always keen to call upon working abroad – allows us to convene broader knowledge and cultures and also constantly widens and fuels our practice. These different territories are confronted by the office's ongoing projects but also by research, writings and teaching (studio at the *Berlage Institute* on Taksim Square in Istanbul, etc).

The four following themes express coherence throughout the scales that are tackled and amongst the practice's projects. These four fragments are not at all conclusive nor they are limiting but they form a guideline for approaching design.

1. LIST

A list is a primitive form of intelligence. It produces a rapid and ephemeral structure out of chaotic facts, events and thoughts. It is a sequence of notations, following an order without the necessity of revealing its inner logics.

A list is almost nothing. It does not produce space. It is an open, cumulative system. According to Hugh of Saint Victor, a German theologian from the 11th century, in the face of chaos and flood, man can do only three things : a list, a map and an ark.



Ad Reinhardt, *Art Words*, 1951

2. CHAOS

The contemporary city appears as an amalgam of heterogeneous fragments, in which one can hardly identify any order or rational logics. It is a result of multiple technical and socio-economical logics, all legitimate, but just placed side by side. Our assumption is that most of today's urban chaos is not the spectacular congestion-based chaos of the *Großstadt*. It is rather a grey chaos : diffused, silent, insignificant. It is a collection of banal elements : allotments, infrastructure, commercial zones, city fragments.



Lee Friedlander, *New York*, 1970

3. NEUTRALITY

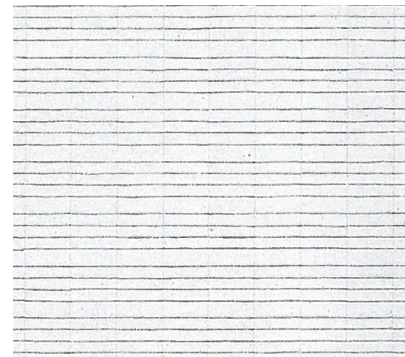
«Sometimes it is important to find out what the city is - instead of what it was, or what it should be.»

(Rem Koolhaas, Atlanta)

The search for neutrality is a will to break-up with a paradigmatic reading of urbanization. It is an inquiry for a pacified relation to chaos. Neutrality does not mean compliance but maximum receptivity. A quest for an accurate interaction with the present, attentive and non-arrogant.

Without chaos — the polyphonic nature of the contemporary city — neutral posture does not make sense.

Neutrality is not a search for resignation. The Neutral can and must be an active value of projection.



Agnes Martin, *Leaves (détail)*, 1966

4. METHOD

LIST sees the project as a methodological process. Method means for us a systematic exploitation of project hypotheses. It allows us to respect the singularities of contemporary urban situations and to avoid the necessity of a concept (which is a reduction of the divers). We create and develop specific methodologies for specific questions and contexts. Methods capable of absorbing the complexity of contemporary urban processes : non linear and diffused.

These methods also aim at producing iconography, vocabulary and technics that allow to react to chaos without closed ideologies and emphasize the status of the project as a dynamic and enthusiastic process.



Gordon Bunshaft (SOM), Connecticut, 1955