



Brussels
Capital of Europe

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This book arose out of an important observation: the city has reached a stalemate and is running out of hope. The European city seems to have ground to a halt in its plans, the victim of oversight, suspicion or even a rejection of imagination by its architects, decision makers and residents.

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This book arose out of words: innumerable analyses of the multiple failure of successive "Brusselisations", but also passionate discussions with architects, both Belgian and foreign, about what should be done. Some are convinced that action is required, but no longer believe in it; others have urged us to act, for us and for them.

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This book arose from a process of reflection triggered by the trauma of devastated districts and missed opportunities and the backward-looking tinkering that followed. We have dreamt up the conditions that are necessary to cure the city's ills. We need to rediscover creativity and hope, but only if we accept to take a good look at our past. No project can be credible without awareness of one's history. That is why we are presenting the views of artists in this book, setting out concrete data and retracing the genealogy of the wounds and the strengths of this thousand year old city.

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This book arose from a hope: taking the shortcomings or mistakes as our point of departure, the hope of rebuilding based on genuine projects. Even better to build on the weaknesses to transform them into strengths and restore the dreams of a new urbanity which can be held up as an example for other urban therapies. After all Curitiba serves as a reference for Brazil.

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This book arose from a challenge: with "CHANGE" we wanted to go beyond all the obstacles and restart the machine; ask architects from Brussels and elsewhere to invent projects that are possible, to risk thinking the unthinkable and with the sheath of proposals harvested, contribute to regenerating hope.

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Joël Claisse, architect - Liliane Knopes, publisher

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