



NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS

VIEWS & CONTRIBUTIONS - LILLE METROPOLE



MÉTROPOLE
EUROPÉENNE DE LILLE

THE NEB NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS

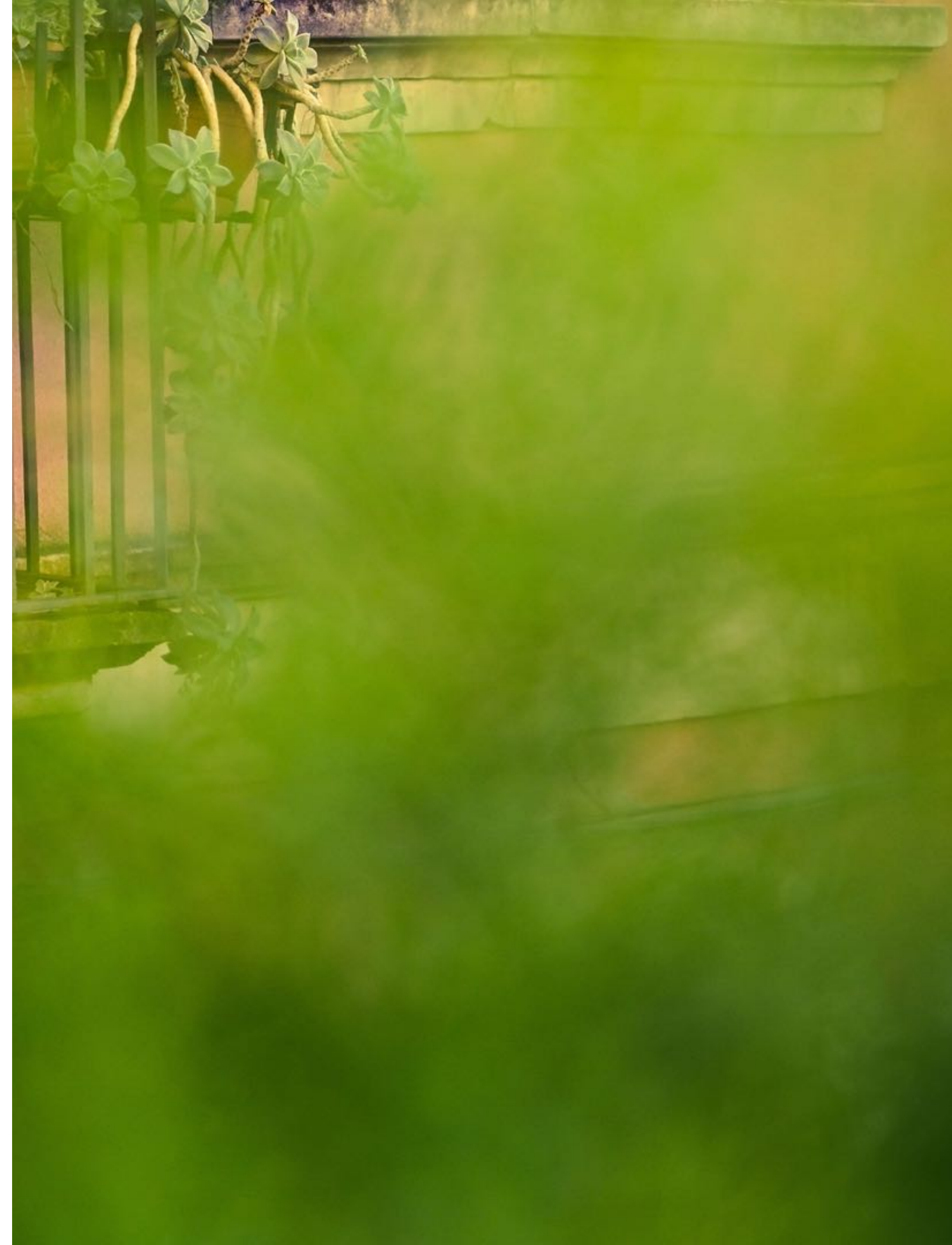
A SHORT GLIMPSE OF A FUTURE

It is an early spring morning in Lille. Ilmiya is sipping on a freshly squeezed orange juice at the balcony of her room contemplating the Deûle river flowing slowly under a bright sunrise. She arrived two days ago by night train from Lubjana.

One year ago she was invited to join a team of nine people in order to collaborate on promising subjects at the NEB of Lille and for the next six months this room on the NEB's campus will be her home. NEBs are twelve creative think/do tanks located in twelve different cities across the Union. They are all unique in shape and architecture but share the same spirit. Every six months they each welcome a new group of about twelve people to explore design and test solutions.

For Ilmiya, who is a true european being part of one of the NEB's projects she heard of so many times is a real pride. Year after year the NEBs have become one of the very iconic and important institutions of the Union and it's green and citizen-centered renovation. Some even like to say that the NEB's network is now a soft power.

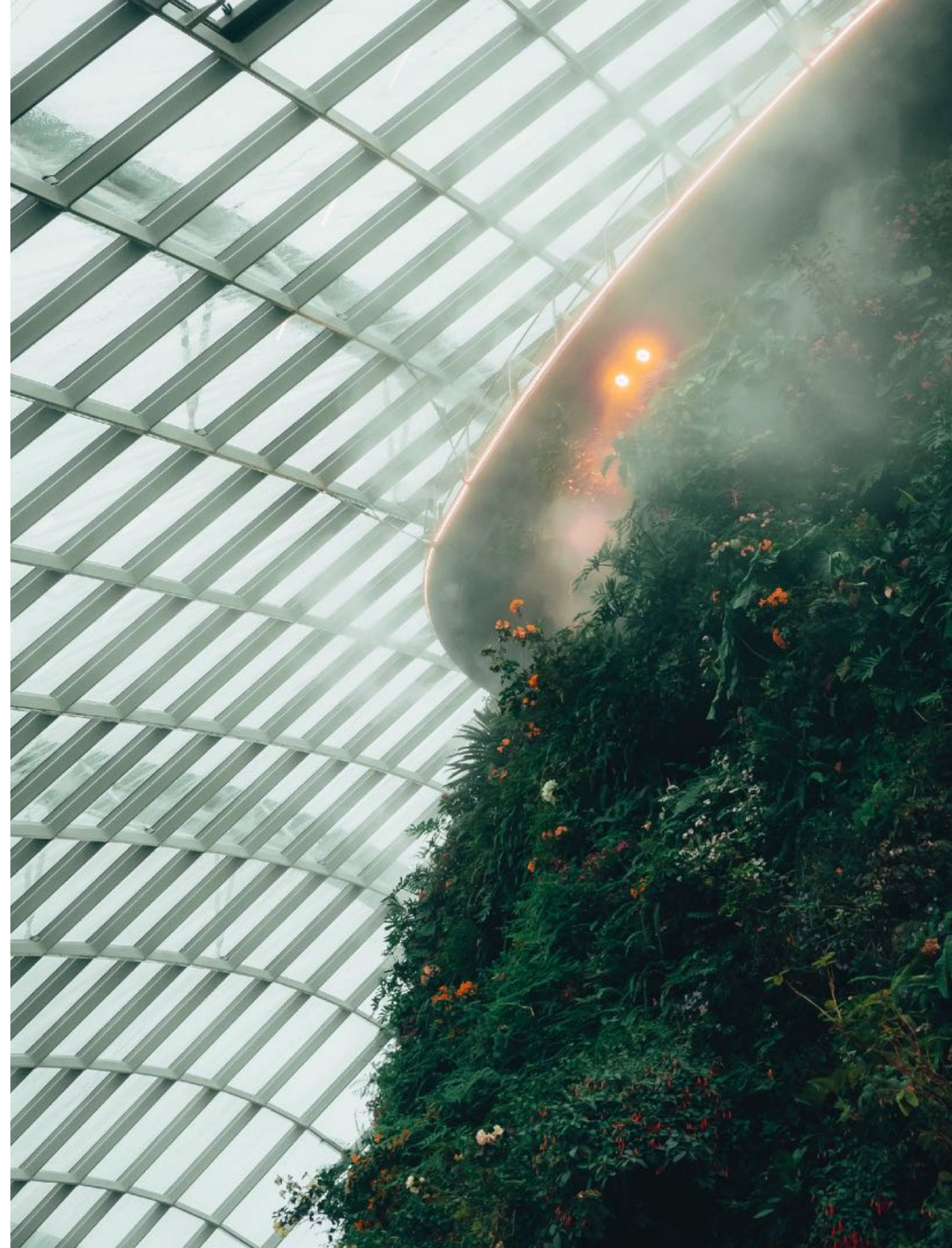
But things were very different when Ilmiya was born twenty seven years ago in the late 2010's. The whole world was on the brink of collapse and so was the Union. In 2020, the first global pandemic of Covid-19 took a huge toll on societies. Titanic challenges were ahead and Europe was cracking. During the next two decades NEBs played a key role in the development of a new European spirit providing and diffusing a strong and shared vision. Sustainability, climate change, the renewal of democracy were the major challenges to tackle back then but the people who were collaborating in NEBs were up to the task and produced new ideas, creative strategies and new ways of doing things.



The challenge is not over yet and this is why Ilmiya is here in Lille to be part of the solution here in Lille. After a quick shower she dresses up, packs her computer, her note book and some pens. Put up a light jacket and walk down the stairs to cross the gardens heading to main building. This Neb is a bit outside the city three kilometers away in the north in a very green area.

This remarkable wooden farm look-a-like building is obviously sustainable and actually carbon neutral like every NEB. It is composed of different workshops and rapid prototyping equipments and creativity rooms. NEB centers are crucibles. Ilmiya's team gathers a diversity of profiles. A dancer, an engineer, a former teacher, a waitress and even a baker are part of the group. They will all share and combine their expertise and are tasked with shaping solutions and perspective for local and global scale. It's not only about style and material aesthetics but also about the aesthetics of experience.

This is only a story, a fiction amongst many possible bright futures that the Union can achieve and make real.



OUR CONTRIBUTION

CONTEXT

Lille Metropole, has just completed its World Design Capital year, after a four years preparation and organization since the idea of applying for this worldwide competition was initiated.

Former most industrialized city in France that suffered from a deep economic and social downturn due to globalization, Lille Metropole has proved its resilience thanks to its ability to transform and evolve. 2004 has seen Lille as a European Culture Capital kicking off this process with the creation of its "Maisons Folies" with the ambition of promoting people's cultures and triggering unexpected and fruitful encounters between people from various cultural and professional backgrounds, from which emerged creative and socially inclusive projects. Lille Metropole as the World Design Capital 2020 has strengthened this participative dynamic through a user-centered design approach giving birth to 600 experiments or Proof of concept (POC) that should contribute to its economic, cultural, urban, social and environmental transition. Showcased in 6 POC Houses, each with a dominant topic (living, mobility, care, circular economy, collaborative city, public action) these POC were a milestone in various design process, that of product or service prototyping, matching needs identified with field immersion and user research phase.



To add to this transformation movement I have been invited to join this institution as a product and service designer to develop and lead the policies design Lab. This Lab's purpose as a team and as a space is to help the whole organization to face transformation urges that the challenges of this century call, by embedding design methodology and collective intelligence into it's project and internal culture. Spreading field researchs, prototyping, experimenting and testing practices and turning them mainstream at Lille Metropole are part of the things I'm tasked with.

For a product and service designer like me the Bauhaus's name has a very peculiar echo. The matter of the quality of what we produce industrially and politically, the place of human beings in an increasingly technical world and, more broadly, the place of the environment and life, those vital questions that our contemporary western societies are facing are not different from the ones that emerged from the industrial revolution and from those the Bauhaus's designers faced as well.



CONTRIBUTING TO THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS PROJECT

The outlines of the New European Bauhaus are ambitious as they are thrilling and this project is unexpected as it is needed. Of course, many things need to be defined. And beyond what those creative places will look like most of all, what they will enable what could be expected to emerge within their walls and how to make it happen need to be determined more precisely. As the critical point will be to move efficiently from vision to realization my opinion is that it only can be successfully achieved through a process and thinking of design that will help ensure consistency and relevance. Lille Metropole is more and more design-driven and user oriented and in fact *our territory could* constitute an ideal test site for the New European Bauhaus momentum. That is why I am willing to contribute to those round tables as a professional designer first but also as an emissary of Lille Metropole and its experience and motivation.

Here are the key points of my possible contribution :



SHARE OUR EXPERIENCE OF BUILDING A LARGE SCALE DESIGN DYNAMIC

Despite differences like scale and duration the World design Capital project and The New European Bauhaus project share several common stakes.

With more than 3000 people involved in these POCs, from different types of players (Companies, universities, NGOs, social and health centers, local authorities, ...) and citizens, coordinated by designers, our territory has been strongly animated by this design momentum. This mindset and design-led methodology and experience will be shared in your High Level New European Bauhaus round table to help among other things to identify stakes and opportunities.



HELP BUILDING A STRONG PHILOSOPHY AND CONCRETE VISION

President van der Leyen laid out the first items of the New European Bauhaus philosophy. Going further into building the whole philosophy will help to strengthen the project by creating consistency, enhance readability necessary to create synergy.



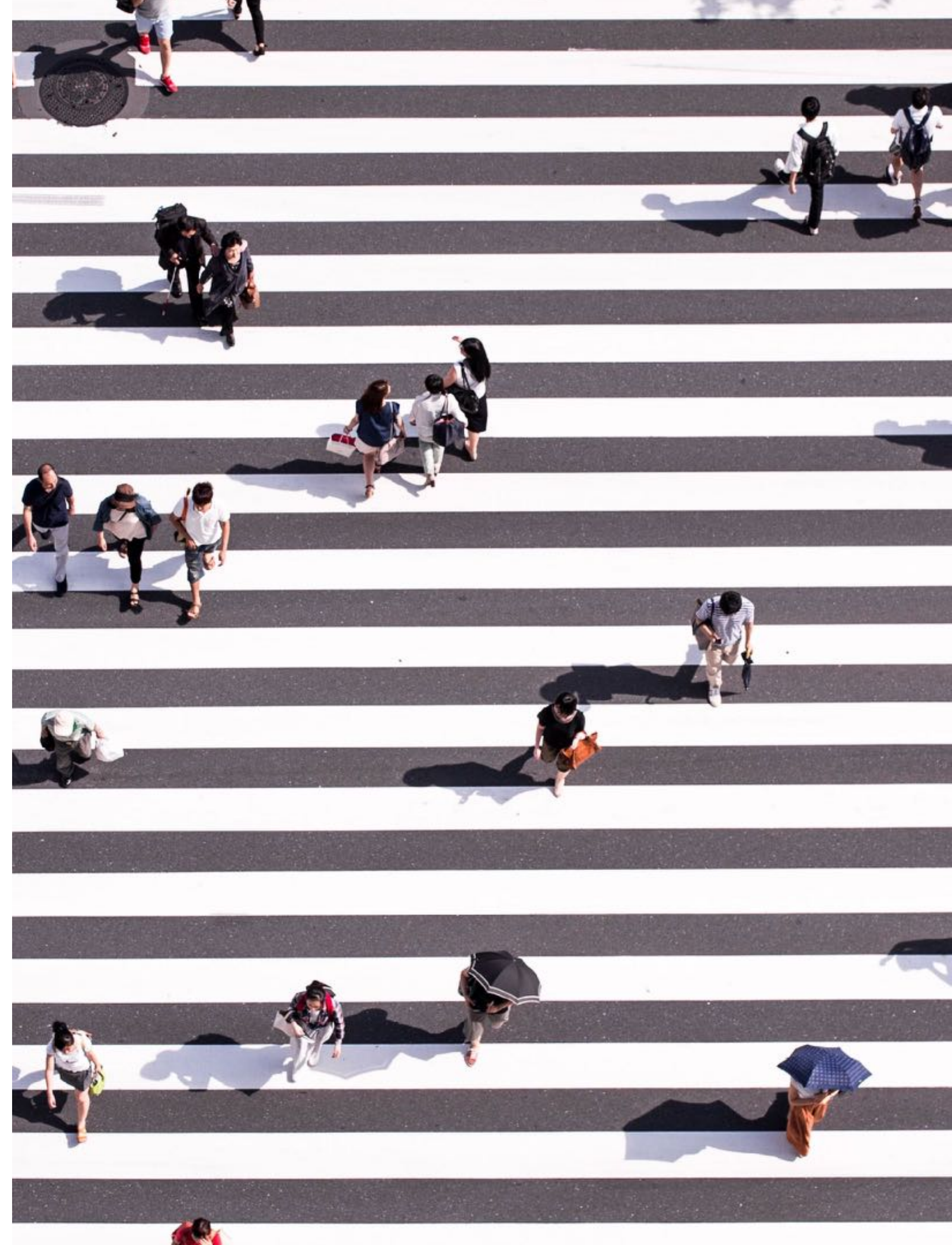
BRING DESIGNER'S PERSPECTIVE AND EXPERTISE AT THE TABLE

Mies Van der Rohe, last director of the Bauhaus had those famous words "God is in the detail" meaning that every project, every creation has to be thought of and designed thoroughly. The ambition of the project and its size will require a strong and rigorous design process and methodology. Design as a methodology will have to be exemplarily part of the project management to move efficiently from vision to operationality and concrete realization. The design field is still the same but on the other hand it has evolved to get richer with specific tools to analyze, ideate, design and communicate. It has become more tactical and strategic. As a designer, I have this expertise and I'm willing to share it at the high round table.



ADVOCATE FOR USERS AND EXPERIENCE MATTERS

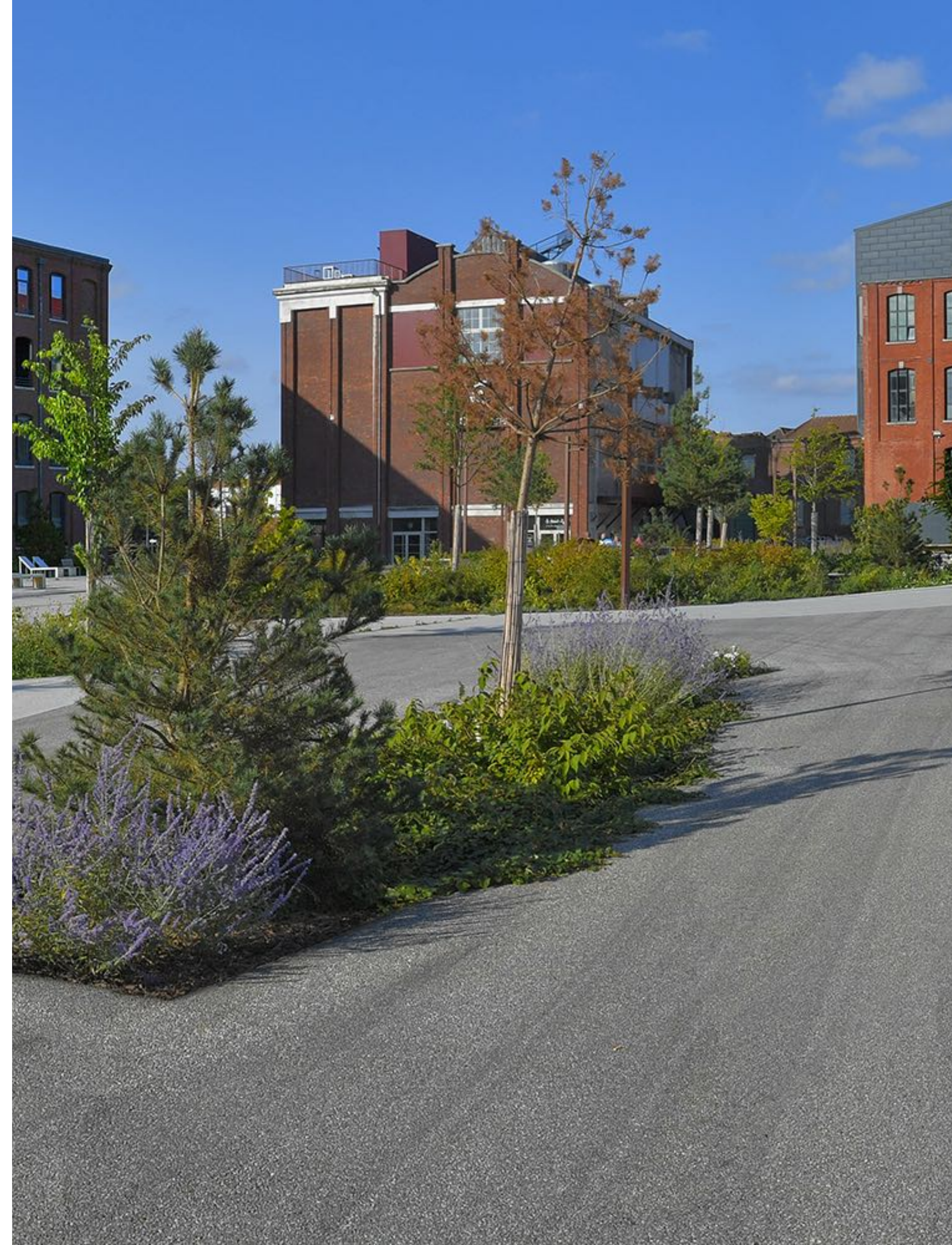
Human factor and the quality of experience tend to be easily crushed in large scale projects between technical and financial requirements. Being concrete and putting the human perspective back in complex situations is an essential element of success. The human being must once again become the measure of things.



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Luther Quenum is a product and service french designer. After his studies, he co-founded the Unqui designers agency and then joined one of the innovation teams of the Le Groupe la Poste. Working in different type of organizations helped him to get a broad vision of how design evolves in different environments. He focuses his work mainly on uses and experiences. He defines design as a global approach to solve problems and create meaningful an human experiences. He is one of the very few service designers hired in a public organization in France.



bauhaus

bauhaus-archiv berlin magdalena droste

1919
1933

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