LA COLONIE

La Colonie is challenging amnesic and deleterious postures. It is a friendly place that, remaining independent, engages in a worksite about living and thinking together.

By implementing this project, the artist Kader Attia intends to ask in the present the questions surrounding the decolonization of peoples as well as that of knowledge, attitudes and practices. Located in a neighborhood home to African, Indian and Asian populations, close to the Gare du Nord and thus at the crossroads of Europe and the world, La Colonie aims to reunite – without exclusion and through these great platforms that are artistic and intellectual creation – all identities and all stories, in particular those of minorities.

Both landmark and shelter, La Colonie is a space of variegated identity: it is a bar and an agora; a laboratory and a concert hall; a place of words, of listening, of sharing, of experiments, of displays.

A UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE FOR A FOLIATED PROJECT

Set back, protected from the bustle of the street, the interior of La Colonie is dominated by a high skylight that offers peaceful, overhead light.

On the ground floor the bar area extends over more than 200 m2 where one can unwind over coffee, meet friends for a drink, eat on the go, listen to a concert or attend a screening.

On the first floor is a mezzanine overlooking the bar like it would an interior courtyard. Isolated from the ground floor with windows that let through only light, this space is dedicated to sharing knowledge in motion. One can come listen and offer other forms of thoughts through public dialogues. La Colonie intends to host collectives, activists, university research groups, artists, social actors, inviting them to the open sharing of experiences and knowledge. Here we can attend conferences, lectures, readings, testimonials, participate in writing and other workshops...

The second floor is devoted to the various forms and concepts of art. Far from a museum or institutional context, the artistic proposals are as much conceptual as they are formal, a-formal or performed. The projects are also an opportunity to develop non-academic critical thinking, in constant relationship to the issues of our present.

The architectural structure of the building, ideal for this kind of combination, offers great fluidity between the different spaces; here, life, thought, commitment and artistic practices interact synergistically.
AN EXPERIENCE OF DE-FRAGMENTATION

La Colonie is built around the necessity to answer to the compelling urgency of social and cultural reparations.

Beyond religious and political divisions, our contemporary societies have reached a hitherto unprecedented level of fragmentation - the development of spaces for dialogues, meetings and confrontations will only push it back. Here, as everywhere else, the fractures multiply in a deafening silence, with an increased violence. La Colonie is an experience of de-fragmentation, of de-compartmentalization, of repairs in which everyone is welcome. This project intends to allow academic knowledges out of arcane institutional and elitist power by enabling it to confront other forms of transmission; it intends to emancipate common systems of understanding and knowledge, sometimes non-western, often underestimated.

La Colonie aspires to de-compartmentalize knowledge and practices by valuing a trans-cultural, trans-disciplinary and trans-generational approach in which everyone finds a place. We are betting that under the aegis of exchanges and discussions, art and thought are the strongest vectors of this defragmentation.

If La Colonie is a physical meeting place, it also wants to archive this present in the making, and freely offers the exchanges and experiments for which it is the theater. La Colonie’s digital database may be accessed and used at any time by whoever wishes. Following this logic, La Colonie will periodically and on a large-scale publish a free newspaper. We are thus also relying on a viral defragmentation that can act as a counter-power, allowing different tunes to be heard.