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# pyL Ososphère : Popular Music, Temporary Uses a in Strasbourg France

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# L'Ososphère: Popular Music, Temporary Uses and Planning in Strasbourg France

## Abstract

This article focuses on the temporary activation via popular music of former industrial buildings awaiting redevelopment in Strasbourg, France.

The renting out of lucrative areas for certain periods of time, either for continuous use or one-off events, to cultural entrepreneurs, artists, NGOs and small businesses is increasing. In relation to popular music, temporary uses work in relation to one-time live events and yearly festivals attracting crowds to former industrial areas, the creation of affordable rents for rehearsal spaces, studios and clubs, and other experimental uses.

These processes increasingly develop durable effects in cities, both on the spatial and on the socio-cultural level.

This article analyses in particular *Les Nuits électroniques de l'Ososphère* festival, which has taken place in Strasbourg France since 1997.

## 1. Introduction

The on-going reconfiguration of the global economy, often referred to as “post-Fordism” (Bell, 1976), has moved a large part of heavy industry from Europe and the Western world to less-regulated countries with cheaper work forces. Moreover, a series of economic downturns starting in the mid-1970s brought radical changes to the structure and paradigms of European cities. First and foremost, these changes made cities more important than ever before (Les Gales and Harding, 1998). However they also left large amounts of former industrial spaces shrinking, vacant or redundant. The accomplished transition to a fully functioning post-industrial economy can be recognised only in a few urban centres and which often have limited life spans. This process put also citizenship into question, as people lost trust in formal institutions and politics (Bell, 1976); however this also brought the development of alternative forms of participation and a renewed attachment to place (Bishop and Williams, 2012).

Pop-up restaurants, urban beaches, block parties, music festivals, time banks, guerrilla gardening and knitting, container cafés and bike-repair workshops: there has clearly been a resurgence of urban culture in its creative, public, artisanal and spontaneous dimensions in many European centres (Oswalt et al, 2013). This activism is often an expression of certain subcultures, scenes or youth communities, but it is not purely oppositional; on the contrary there is a clear attempt at building a wider democratic consensus and at reaffirming citizens' equality, place sustainability and social welfare. Many of these activities have also deeply affected urban planning, making it a more flexible, conscious, experimental and sustainable process (Ruoppila and Lehtovuori, 2012).

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One common denominator for many of the above-mentioned cultural activities is the fact that they are place-based and time-dependent, meaning that they are usually made possible through temporary uses, i.e. the temporary use of residual areas and buildings with no formal use.

Definitions of temporary uses vary a lot in accordance to scales, actors and contexts. Their interest within urban studies has risen considerably since 2008, in connection with the on-going economic crisis, which made a huge amount of newly built office space and housing redundant. Temporary uses boost a place's reputation with very low maintenance costs and can positively affect its future real estate value.

Furthermore, 'the temporary' has also become a common strategy of urban development and policy making. Increasingly cities are relying on events and big projects as place-making activities and strong emphasis is put on the provision of services (Häußermann and Siebel, 1993).

This article explores temporary uses via popular music in Strasbourg, France, and analyses their significance from the point of view of their spatial and socio-cultural implications.

It achieves this by focusing on the actors involved in the production and consumption of temporary uses, on the material sites where they are performed and on their symbolic meaning for the city.

I adopted a qualitative approach, involving participant observation and interviews with people involved in *Les Nuits électroniques de l'Ososphère* (from now on: Ososphère) and in the redevelopment of *Deux Rives*, a former industrial area on the eastern part of Strasbourg, directly bordering the Rhein river and Germany. I participated in a few Ososphère events and in other temporary uses on the considered sites and spent time observing the redevelopments and registering their evolution with photographs, between 2010 and 2015.

Of course, from an urban planning point of view, temporary uses can be defined more widely; settlement sites available in various European cities for travellers, Roma families, illegal migrants and seasonal fairs are often described as such.

However the effects of these uses have been neutral if not negative on the places themselves and on their redevelopment.

Current research on temporary uses has focused mostly on their implementation within urban planning.

For instance Ruoppila and Lehtovuori (2012) reveal how temporary uses can make planning more experimental. The authors identify various typologies of temporary uses based on their location within the city and on the responses by the city authorities. Krivy (2012) criticises temporary uses, as carried out in Helsinki's Kalasatama area, as instrumental to planning governmentability and therefore not conducive to promoting the free creative flows that the municipality involved claims to boost.

However, in these analyses, the cultural sector simply provides interesting case studies, in the form of events, or remains inexplicably in the background, as if culture had no agency in itself.

Cultural temporary uses as a strategy of urban planning has been practised successfully for some years already, mostly in post-socialist cities such as former East Berlin (Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung, 2004).

The *Zwischennutzung* (in-between use) has been widely implemented in relation to former state-owned buildings that after 1989 were given to the *Treuhand*, the state trust agency, to be returned to their previous owners or put onto the market.

In the meantime, these buildings were legally rented to cultural entrepreneurs and became galleries, clubs and bars. These defined the image of Berlin as “poor but sexy” and its success throughout the 1990s and the 2000s.

However, as a consequence of this process of mobilisation, Colomb (2012) identifies a series of tensions, dilemmas and conflicts, which forced some temporary uses to be displaced, transformed into commodities or to disappear.

In a way Berlin represents a unique case, where historical, geopolitical and social specificities made temporary uses grass-root and independent, but also playful and mundane.

Strategies of the temporary have a clear manifestation also in the private sector, where the birth of new technologies, ventures and ideas is nowadays increasingly based on start-ups, i.e. small companies with little capital that are incubated in hubs and whose future is determined by the trust of public and private financiers.

On a more general level, the cultural sector involved in temporary uses is a complex network of industries, artists, artisans, entrepreneurs, curators, amateurs, volunteers and activists.

This network produces and circulates cultural products as texts, images and sounds, manages creativity and affects therewith economic, social and cultural life in specific urban contexts (Hesmondhalgh, 2007).

Cultural industries differ greatly in their impact on space, due to their complex and heterogeneous organization and to their reception and use over time.

It would therefore very hard to determine the real impact of temporary uses without focusing on one specific cultural sector. In this regard, popular music culture offers an interesting “cultural field”, where space is of uttermost importance.

Increasingly, urban centres have been branding themselves as “music cities” and have understood popular music as successful instrument of urbanisation. Popular music, as intangible cultural heritage, has become a successful instrument to define the image of various centres, from metropolises to small centres, from industrial conurbations to rural areas.

Moreover, as Frith (2010) states:

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Live music [...] is particularly significant for understanding musical locality and place. Live music has to happen somewhere, and the changing places of music (where live events happen, the geography of audience) are a crucial strand of social history. And the place of live music is also a venue, whether a pub back room, a farmer's fields or a purpose built stadium. The changing spaces of musical performance contain their own technological, architectural and ideological accounts of what people have understood as a *good* sound, a *good* performance, a *good* listening experience, a *good* night out. (italics by the author).

Frith here stresses the "feel-good" aspects of the live consumption of popular music; elsewhere he refers to popular music listening in general as pure and simple "pleasure" (Frith, 1996).

It is the idiosyncratic relation between pleasure and socio-spatial change, which make popular music a key element in this paper. Several scholars have focused for instance on the role that dance-music played in the formation of safe spaces for ethnic or sexual minorities (see for instance: Erin K. Sharpe, 2008 and Garcia, 2014).

It is the nature itself of popular music practices which is temporary: a guitar strap, a fly case, the structure of a drum kit, the handle on an amplifier, an LP cover plus its inner sleeve and Spotify, to name just a few disparate examples that all testify that popular music is highly mobile.

However, there are different typologies of popular music-led temporary uses to be taken into account, with very different outcomes from the social and spatial point of view. A festival, an illegal rave or a 'guerilla gig' have different logistics and affect places differently.

Raves for instance challenge the legal issues related to temporary uses. Their appearance in the late 1980s in the UK brought moral panic and repressive legislation all over Europe (Redhead et al, 1998). The so-called guerilla gigs, practiced by London bands such as *The Libertines*, in the early 2000s as impromptu events in public spaces, mostly with marketing purposes (Andrews 2004). Busking on a busy walking street can also be classified as temporary use.

The most common typology is however the festival:

[...] music festivals are classic examples of participatory experiences that unite aesthetic and social ideals and imaginaries in discrete but temporary spaces. Such spaces also have other identities, a classic Italian hill-town (Perugia), a vibrant European tourist destination and regional capital (Barcelona), and a British aristocratic country estate (Charlton Park): whilst these spaces become subsumed temporarily by the influx of festival-goers, the festivals become markers in a cultural calendar that fixes these spaces within a global cultural cartography (Chalcraft et al, 2011, p. 27).

The ephemeral temporal dimension of festivals can become even stronger in the case of one-off events, like big epochal gigs taking place in an area under redevelopment. A classic example of this is Roger Waters' *The Wall Live*, a gig, which took place on 21 July 1990 in a vacant lot left by the removal of the Berlin Wall.

Wynn (2015) in his study of three US festivals concludes that festivals are increasingly important both for strategic urban planning and for the music industries. He also describes the competing visions and

expectations they evoke and notes the temporary and malleable contingencies of festivalisation.

He also sees festivalisation as a raising cultural policy at the local level, echoing the already mentioned 'festivalisation of city policies'.

He also determines four main arguments in favour of festivalisation: an economic, a spatial resource, a cultural/social and a symbolic one (Wynn, 2015, p. 230).

From the economic point of view, festivals have been increasingly lucrative. Festivals also use resources, which are at hand in cities, such as parking lots, venues, parks and boost amenities (such as restaurants and bars). They reinforce cultural networking and creativity at the local level and they also brand places.

In addition, most of the above-mentioned activities would not be possible or would have very different outcomes, if not geared and marketed online. For instance on social networks people often share, live or after an event, sounds, texts and images or a combination of them (Holt, 2010).

### 2. New wave of cultural policies in Strasbourg

In 1994, Catherine Trautmann (socialist major of Strasbourg between 1989 and 1997) assigned, after a bid, La Laiterie to the association Artefact. La Laiterie was a former dairy, redeveloped by the city to host a club with two venues for *musiques actuelles* [1]. The Strasbourg Municipality CUS (Communauté Urbaine Strasbourg), the *département* Bas-Rhin, Alsace Region and the French Ministry of Culture subsidise the venue, located in a run-down industrial wasteland at the fringes of La Gare, the district surrounding the city's railway station.

The 1990s represented a time when cultural policies on different scales (European, national, regional and local) started endorsing cultural industries and acknowledging their role in urban development. A starting point for this process was surely the election of Glasgow as European City of Culture in 1990.

García claims that Glasgow:

was the first city to win the title after an open national competition, the first to have more than three years to plan the event, the first to gather substantial public and private support to fund event-specific initiatives and the first to understand the potential of the ECOC as a catalyst for urban regeneration through culture. (García, 2005).

At the French national level, a similar trajectory is connected to Jack Lang, who served two times as Minister of Culture between 1981 and 1986 and later between 1986 and 1993.

Socialist Lang pursued the association between culture and economy in the process of democratising culture (see: Girard, 1997 and Poirrier, 2004). His definition of culture expanded to include various and individual forms of self-expression and what was previously labelled "mass culture" or "leisure". His attention to popular music became clear in the successful implementation of the Fête de la Musique, which still takes place on June 21st in various cities in and outside France; it also brought the creation of ad hoc legislation concerning popular music (see: Teilllet, 2002 and 2003).

La Laiterie, whose building hosts two venues – *la grande sale* (the big room), with a capacity of 870 and

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the “lesser room” (*le club*), and the offices of the association – was understood as a sort of “cultural incubator” in the decaying district of La Gare, surrounding the main railway station.

Other similar but smaller experiences like Le Molodoï (mostly programming bands of alternative music genres such as punk, ska and reggae), Le Hall des Chars (contemporary theatre, dance, visual arts, music) and La Semencerie (plastic arts) were later developed in close proximity to the club, due to the huge amount of vacant industrial spaces available within a few blocks and being quite secluded from the district main housing area. All these experiences are partly subsidised at least by the municipality.

Artefact as umbrella-label is legally constituted by two different cultural associations: one called legally Artefact PRL, running the two venues at La Laiterie and tutoring local music projects and the other labelled Quatre4.0, taking care of two events: the Festival des Artefacts and Les Nuits électroniques de l’Ososphère (hereafter: Ososphère).

A formal agreement links the two associations and Thierry Danet presides both. Danet is a full-on Strasbourg enthusiast, with a strong resemblance in style and entrepreneurial spirit to a Manchester equivalent, the late Tony Wilson [2].

The municipality saw the festivals as too risky and advised Danet to create two different associations. The La Laiterie club represents a flagship project of the city with regards to popular music, while the festivals are organised and geared in a more business-oriented way, with the help of sponsors and service providers.

This article deals more closely with the experience of the Ososphère because of its relevance to temporary uses.

## 3. Les Nuits électroniques de l’Ososphère

### 3.1. *Le French Touch and its spatial effects*

L’Ososphère took place for the first time in La Laiterie club, in September 1997 and since then has happened at least once a year, for a series of days. According to Thierry Danet (2014), the festival was first conceived as an answer to rave and electronic music culture, which was developing in France at the time, with a slight delay from the UK and northern Europe:

It is first of all a set of art-related questions; that is the strong coming of techno in France at the beginning of the 1990s, the French touch with Air and Laurent Garnier and Daft Punk. There were raves taking place in bunkers and we were just a club with a stage and an audience and there was no techno in La Laiterie. We got authorized by the city to welcome raves that were illegal in France at the time. We didn’t organise them; we were hosting them and guaranteeing that everything was ok in relation to drugs etc. (Danet, 2014)

In addition to this Danet recognises Ososphère as an attempt to “respond to techno with an idea, which should have come from our side”; this idea is explained as “an urban gesture, which might be perceived by the people” (Danet, 2014).

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From the very beginning there was an attempt to work as a typical electronic music event, breaking the codes of the rock club, through simultaneous happenings and the possibility for the audience to build their own trajectory, their own “ososphère”.

From 1997 on, the schedule of the festival and the list of acts (DJs, electronic acts and bands) has grown bigger and more diverse. For instance attention has been paid to attracting over-the-border crowds, with the addition of German electronic acts.

At the same time, the intertwining between electronic music and digital art has increased, as a reflection of the impact of digitisation on culture in general and on live music in particular; furthermore, there is the attempt to leave a tangible mark on urban space and to modify the citizen’s understanding of the city:

Creation and creativity are in the internet, it is not expensive, there are no juridical frameworks, but this kind of creativity does not penetrate public spaces, we were not able to see it anymore and it was no more socialized. With Ososphère we got the idea to invite artists, work with them and develop a logic of temporary public spaces and a naïve urbanism. (Danet, 2014)

The Ososphère in all its many guises was able, until 2009, to expand and occupy ephemeral empty spaces and minor halls (like the already mentioned Molodoï and Hall des Chars), with art installations and performances. However, there have been no visible effects on the district La Gare itself, which remains:

an old area, with a multiethnic population of mixed socio-economic status; (...) The quartier includes many small shops run by people belonging to immigrant communities as well as small businesses linked to the railway station (hotels, restaurants, cafés and employment agencies). (Bogatto and Hélot, 2010).

According to Danet, the inhabitants nowadays still perceive the clubs as an annoyance. Although tram lines B and F efficiently serve the area with a stop called “La Laiterie”, there is a sense of remoteness, mainly due to the presence of highways, railway tracks and wasteland, which prevent the place developing into some kind of “creative hub”. The municipality is also at the moment reflecting on the future of the clubs it finances in the area (La Laiterie, Hall des Chares, Molodoï).

It is in 2009 that the festival leaves for the first time the district of La Gare to temporarily occupy various squares in the city in the shape of red shipping containers. Each container hosted an art installation. In a way this action set the trend for the future festival venues, by creating an imaginary connection to the port, to the Rhine and the eastern Franco-German borders of the city and of the whole country:

The idea was to cut through the streets of Strasbourg with design (with the red containers). Strasbourg is a city I really love but there are very big things that simply disappear: the European institutions, we don’t see them, the shipyard, we don’t see it, the Rhine, we don’t see it and it is an incredible thing. Ok Strasbourg was built on the Ill, but it flows into the Rhine, the shipyard is the second biggest river shipyard of France and it is an enormous economic resource and an incredible landscape and for its citizens, it doesn’t exist (...) The east is a cardinal point to claim, we are the eastern gate of France, but that was gone in the city psychology: Germany, the east, the Rhine. Ososphère became a way to follow the city policies, no one



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asked me to create this synergy, but Ososphère had to contribute to a story that the city tells to the outside and to itself and above all it is an incredible shipyard, a magic world where you can actually go. (Danet, 2014)

The red shipping containers metaphorically brought the sea to the Grand Île, which constitutes the historical centre of Strasbourg, as shown in this map, from the 2009 festival booklet:



Fig\_1\_A map of the Grand Île with the container locations; Source: caption from the 2009 Ososphère edition website.

On the same year the so-called *échos flottants* also become a permanent feature of the festival. The Batorama river boats are one of the most successful tourist amenities in Strasbourg and offer an astonishing guided trip through the city via its canals on a glass covered boat. The *échos flottants* consist in the temporary use of these boats for on-board music installations and DJ sets in the mobile setting of Strasbourg canals.

## 3.2 Môle Seegmueller

Deux Rives is the biggest urban project in Strasbourg since the construction of the Neustadt district between 1871 and 1918. It involves 250 hectares along the river Rhine and its related tributaries (Bruxer, 2014). It aims to create an extension of the city centre towards the Rhine, towards the port and its surrounding district and consequently towards the neighbouring German Kehl-Ortenau area.

A former freight and shipyard area of the Seegemuller company, the Môle Seegmueller, nowadays renamed Malreaux peninsula, is one of the flagships of the whole area. It is a peninsular strip in close proximity to the Port of Strasbourg. Three huge industrial buildings from the early 1930s were located in it; the first of them became the Médiathèque Malreaux, a multi-storey public library inaugurated in 2008, with a collection of books, CDs and DVDs, multimedia stations and an auditorium.

The other two buildings are the *Tour Seegmueller*, a silo tower, and the *Entrepôt Seegmueller*, a warehouse similar in size to the one hosting the public library. The tower is currently being redeveloped into MUI (*Maison Universitaire Internationale*), a housing project for students, by SERS (*Société d'aménagement et d'équipement de la région de Strasbourg*, Strasbourg Region development society), a local private-public developer working with urban projects and buildings of local public interest, in partnership with the University of Strasbourg and public institutions (Bruxer, 2014).

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The warehouse has been renamed *Les Dock's* (sic) and has been redeveloped into a complex housing private enterprises (such as restaurants, offices, a school of journalism and communication) and luxury flats. The Port of Strasbourg owned the building and put it in the hands of above-mentioned SERS, which later re-sold it to Icade. The company took care of its redevelopment in partnership with Édifipierre and the Caisse d'Épargne.

It is very unusual for France to name the building with an English word (albeit an incorrectly punctuated one) but it is of course reminiscent of working class culture in its pop imaginary dimension and probably attractive to the Eurocrats who might afford to live there. A portion of the building contains some public utility projects, and remains in the hands of the municipality (also planned are a co-working space, a digital and art centre, and spaces for artists and entrepreneurs).

It is exactly this building that the Ososphère was able to claim for itself in 2011, a few months before the beginning of the dismantlement of the old interiors. Between 11 and 20 February, the Seegmuller warehouse hosted more than thirty installations, works of art, performances and a *café-conversatoire*, with a daily program of DJ sets and live bands, open from 2 p.m. to midnight. On the open space in front of the building a few of the red shipping containers reminded the visitors of the 2009 editions.

Danet explains the choice of place in these terms:

I saw the first building transformed to host the Médiathèque Malraux. It is normal that a city transforms itself, but if we talk about local democracy and that in a city people share something lived and identity-related to impose such a violent act without accompanying it, it is something wrong. It was the only piece of the shipyard within the city and the Strasbourg citizens had to enter it and see it because it was a ghost. The first time I entered it for me it was like a receptacle of the city emotions, I had the impression that all the metaphysics of the city, that we cannot find in urban space, because we have more important things to do, just hid in this building and I felt like locking the door again and let the place be the refuge for all the city metaphysics. We should confront the metaphysics and the poetics of what a city is, we should let this re-enter into politics. (Danet, 2014)

The interiors temporary occupied by the festival were the former 'reception area' on the front, with a lounge area behind it with the café-conversatoire. A whole open floor upstairs was occupied by art installations. The spaces had been empty for years and the patina of dust and debris was evident. Typical of industrial architecture was the presence of linear metal parts to move machineries around and of huge concrete columns throughout the structure. Some areas had been stencilled, revealing individual explorations having taken place before.

In 2012 and 2013, the tower building was temporarily occupied by *La Zone*, an event strikingly similar to Ososphère, and organised by the association Genau, which has however a more underground appeal. The tower was in similar conditions.

It is evident that a process of gentrification already interested the area, for instance with the neighbouring *Black Swan* tower, the UGC ciné cité and the extensive Rivetoille mall and housing complex.

It is therefore debatable if the Ososphère event has had any direct effect. It is however possible to note that Ososphère was allowed to host the festival in the premises, just before the redevelopment of the

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building began and was therefore at least not understood by the redevelopers as an annoyance.

It looks like everybody won: the redevelopers had the chance to get free publicity for the area, Danet and his team could experiment with temporary uses and the municipality could profile itself as a creative city, where cultural experimentations and electronic music are celebrated [3].

Temporary uses in the area continue: in the summer there are urban beaches and a stage for music performances.



Fig\_2\_ The empty Entrepôt Seegmuller in 2010. Source: photo by Pierre Rudloff from Wikipedia, public domain



Fig\_3\_ The Entrepôt Seegmuller being dismantled and carrying a banner marketing its rebirth as Les Dock's; Source (Photo by the Author).



Fig\_4\_ Finished Les Dock's, with restaurants at the ground level. Source: Photo by the Author.

### 3.3 La COOP

Since 2005 the Strasbourg Urban Community (CUS) and the bordering Ortenau *Landeskreis* have been linked through a cross-border administrative entity. The municipality of Strasbourg planned to link itself and embrace the bordering city of Kehl through the extension of the D tramline, the creation of a Franco-German educational pool and the densification of the bordering area of Port du Rhin district with new housing. What was partly mono-functional industrial area and partly segregated impoverished housing district will change considerably in the coming years.

In 2012 l'Ososphère installed itself in the premises of the COOP Alsace in the Port du Rhin. COOP Alsace is a co-operative that used to own and run several supermarkets in the region. The place in question used to be the headquarters of the distribution, rightly placed on the shipyard itself, in the Port du Rhin district,

bordering the German town of Kehl via the Rhine.



Fig\_5\_ The COOP complex seen from the back with the 'malterie' towering over it. Source: Photo by the Author.

The COOP headquarters are an enormous industrial complex, started in 1911, featuring buildings of various epochs, including bakeries, wine cellars, butchers, machines and refrigerators for large-scale distribution. In front of it towers a *malterie* (malt house) with gigantic silos and several other industrial buildings, cranes and containers, typical of an industrial port. Some artists have settled in the area for some years already, thanks to affordable rents and big spaces, and opened ateliers.

The exact place where the Ososphère has taken place since 2012 is the *Atelier d'embouteillage*, a functionalist building completed in 1964 for the bottling of wine that ceased to function in 2007. It is composed of two separate constructions linked by a bridge, with a façade of oblique glass panels.

Again, a *café-conversatoire* and some digital art installations are located in the building, with the chance to use vast areas as dance-floors.

The real housing part of the district is divided from this area by some railway tracks and has a clear *banlieue* feel to it, thanks in part to the presence of numerous satellite dishes, ethnic restaurants and shops, and, especially, the groups of young men hanging out in tracksuits on street corners.

In an attempt to work with the inhabitants of the district, Ososphère offered some cultural events, including sampling workshops, engraving, radio and an experimental walk. However the festival recognised that its impact should be more something that works with the whole of the city of Strasbourg and not just limited to one particular district.

## 4. Spatial and socio-cultural implications of the temporary

### 4.1 Spatial implications

Ososphère clearly offers some spatial implications that need to be taken into account. The festival shows a continuous aesthetical engagement with space. The choice of venues are highly motivated by their industrial architectonic connotation. Danet, the main organiser of the event, continuously refers to the beauty of the Ososphère locations, in the interview I conducted with him. The Malreaux peninsula (former *Môle Seegmueller*) and the COOP represent two eras of industrial development: the first bond to the beginning of the century heavy industry and defined by red bricks and iron, the second to 1960s functionalism of glass and bare concrete.

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The Môle Seegmueller redeveloped into a complex housing expensive flats and services, while maintaining the original external structure. This is in many ways typical of contemporary urbanisation. More complex is the COOP case; the signifiers of economic crisis still affect our perception of 1970s industrial functionalism and its appeal for future tenants is questionable.

The SPL (Local Public Society) *Deux Rives*, which manages the area, regards Ososphère and its ephemeral dimension as an interesting element that will contribute to the district (Bruxer, 2104).

The festival is a pioneer of other cultural activities that might be thriving in the space and has a clear function in providing a sort of material 'cultural barrier' between the noisy and smelly industrial shipyard and the future housing developments, which obviously cannot coexist side by side.

In addition, it provides a positive exciting image to the district, in a way, which in France has been first conceived with the regeneration of the Isle de Nantes, also through art, with the theatre company Royal Deluxe and with the Machines (See: Morice and Violier, 2009; Ambrosino et al., 2016)

The adjustments to both sites under consideration have actually been minimal and carried out by specialists. Also the surrounding neighbourhoods are not affected by noise pollution, since in both cases considered, the buildings where the temporary uses took place were rather isolated.

However, in 2015 and 2016 the festival couldn't take place in the COOP buildings, because the municipality refused to authorize their public use, after an inspection by the *Service départemental d'incendie et de sécurité du Bas-Rhin* (Bas-Rhin Departmental fire and safety department, SDIS 67).

The festival relocated to La Laiterie, where it had started. Only in April 2017, in coincidence with the inauguration of the tramline to Kehl, the Ososphère returned on the COOP premises, although, again, temporarily.

According to the Ososphère Facebook page, the festival attracted 13.000 people to the electronic music night acts and 26.000 to the exhibition spaces in the afternoon ("L'édition 2017 de L'Ososphère se clôture... La machine à ville et à souvenirs communs reste active!" *L'Ososphère Facebook Page*, 21 May 2017).

The festival will be able to permanently relocate in the premises once the full *Deux Rives* project will be completed in 2019 and the ownership of the building will be transferred from the COOP society.

### 4.2 Cultural and societal implications

L'Ososphère represents an interesting collision of cultural industries, not only popular music is involved in terms of DJ sets and live acts, but also digital art, broadcasting and performance. The main attempt of the organisers is to have artists and performers engage with place on a variety of levels, ranging in scale from the premises themselves to the whole city. Born within the city, partly as a product of the municipality and in continuous and close interaction with municipal institutions, Ososphère attempts to practice democratic participation and inclusiveness.

In 2017, the café conservatoire became again a public agora for discussing on-going urbanization in Strasbourg. Moreover, several local associations and organizations were able to interact with the visitors, by presenting their activities and organizing free workshops. Sure is the fact that without popular music, in

form of electronic music events, all this won't be happening or won't be able to succeed in attracting people in such volumes.

Heritage (Bottà, 2016) also plays a role in the choice of temporary uses: the two chosen temporary locations for the Ososphère represent important landmarks in the forgotten and invisible industrial history of Strasbourg. The festival points at unusual and unexpected "objects of design" within the city and makes them temporarily viable or accessible to everybody. During the day the location of the festival is free to visits and installations are spread on site.

### Conclusions

Temporary uses are able to provide social, cultural and spatial benefits ranging from positive place branding to the re-affirmation of citizenship, from the enhancement of creativity to the establishment of sustainable planning practices. They can help develop more nuanced and adjustable urban planning strategies, which take into account mobilities and temporalities of city users, changes in economic regimes but also a ludic and hedonist engagement with the city. Moreover, temporary uses are usually carried out with low investments from the municipal side.

However, they can also cause gentrification and related displacement, the formation of elitist cultural enclaves or, worse, segregation, illegality and social disruption. Ososphère relies on a strong public participation in economic terms and a synergy among the vision of the municipality, the one of the organisers and the one of the redevelopers. If citizens will accept, contest or celebrate this with their everyday life is yet to be seen.

*Deux Rives* redevelopment will move approximately 10.000 new inhabitants to the area in the next future (Bruxer, 2014). If this redevelopment will maintain its cultural and musical implications has still to be seen. Sure is that temporary uses activated the above-mentioned synergies, under specific spatial and socio-cultural conditions, which seem emblematic of current contemporary urbanisation.

### Footnotes

[1] Musiques actuelles is a formulation common at the legislative and policy level, used in France to refer to music genres, practices and cultures, which might be loosely translated as popular music.

[2] Tony Wilson (1950-2007) was a Granada TV journalist from Manchester, who started the Hacienda Club and Factory Records. He promoted cultural life in Manchester and framed the international success of bands such as Joy Division and Happy Mondays.

[3] See for instance this video-documentary published on the website of the City of Strasbourg: <http://videos.strasbourg.eu/video/-/view/886117/lososphere-au-mole-seegmuller-fevrier-2011> (last accessed: 06.06.2017).

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