



arc en rêve centre d'architecture bordeaux

filmmakers, Bordeaux, Paris, Rome

# HOMO URBANUS BÈKA & LEMOINE

**HOMO URBANUS**  
Bèka & Lemoine filmmakers

curators  
**arc en rêve centre d'architecture**  
Francine Fort, director  
Michel Jacques, architect, artistic director  
assisted by  
Wenwen Cai, architect, project manager

exhibition in collaboration with  
**Ila Bèka & Louise Lemoine**, filmmakers

arc en rêve centre d'architecture is delighted to be welcoming visitors once again with the film installation **HOMO URBANUS** by Ila Bèka & Louise Lemoine. This project, conceived as a diary of subjective immersion, invites the visitor to experience the rhythm of 10 world cities in space and time.

From their first film *Koolhaas Houselife* in 2008, which focused on the architecture of Rem Koolhaas' emblematic practice, to **HOMO URBANUS** – 10 films on 10 world cities made between 2017 and 2020, Ila Bèka & Louise Lemoine have developed a cinematic approach that embraces anthropological, social and cultural issues and takes a highly contemporary look at the inhabitable environment. We have chosen to schedule this exhibition following the Covid-19 lockdown because **HOMO URBANUS** celebrates the multi-faceted yet unique character of public space, where commonality and the experience of otherness go hand in hand.

Francine Fort, general director, arc en rêve centre d'architecture

10 films / 10 cities  
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Since 1981 arc en rêve centre d'architecture has elaborated a cultural awareness-building strategy focusing on contemporary architecture and extending into city planning, landscape design, aimed at broadening perceptions of a changing world. Its internationally recognised programme features exhibitions, lectures, public discussions, publications, workshops for children, seminars for adults, visits to buildings, city tours, and planning experiments..

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- 10 FILMS / 10 CITIES**
- Homo Urbanus Neapolitanus** Naples, 50'
  - Homo Urbanus Seoulianus** Seoul, 44'
  - Homo Urbanus Rabatius** Rabat, 50'
  - Homo Urbanus Petroburgumus** St. Petersburg, 41'
  - Homo Urbanus Bogotanus** Bogota, 43'
  - Homo Urbanus Kyotoitus** Kyoto, 84'
  - Homo Urbanus Tokyoitus** Tokyo, 55'
  - Homo Urbanus Shanghaianus** Shanghai, 72'
  - Homo Urbanus Dohanus** Doha, 62'
  - Homo Urbanus Venetianus** Venice, 65'

**Ila Bèka**  
Italian artist and filmmaker  
Architect graduated from University IUAV of Venezia and Paris-Belleville architecture school.

**Louise Lemoine**  
French filmmaker  
Graduated of art history and cinema from Sorbonne University in Paris.

Ila Bèka and Louise Lemoine have been working together for the past 15 years mainly focusing their research on experimenting new narrative and cinematographic forms in relation to contemporary architecture and urban environment. Focusing their interest mainly on how the built environment shapes and influences our daily life, they have developed a very unique and personal approach which can be defined, in reference to French writer Georges Perec, as an "anthropology of the ordinary". Presented by *The New York Times* as the "cult figures in the European architecture world", Bèka & Lemoine's work has been widely acclaimed as "a new form of criticism" (*Mark*) which "has deeply changed the way of looking at architecture" (*Domus*).

In 2008, released *Koolhaas Houselife*, cult film of architecture  
In 2016, 16 films of Bèka & Lemoine has been acquired by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York for its permanent collection.

After the trying constraints of lockdown and social distancing that brutally reduced urban space to its strict minimum, making it into a place where isolated individuals merely cohabit, **HOMO URBANUS** is a cinematic odyssey offering a vibrant tribute to what we have been most cruelly deprived of: namely, public space.

Taking the form of a free-wheeling journey around the world (10 films, 10 cities), the project invites us to observe in detail the multiple forms and complex interactions that exist every day between people and their urban environments. Somewhere between visual anthropology and observational cinema, these films put urban man under the microscope and encourage us to take a closer look at individual and collective behaviour, interpersonal dynamics, social tensions, and the economic and political forces that play out every day on the grand stage of the city streets.

Walking in an unfamiliar city and gathering impressions, sensing vibrations, collecting images glimpsed on a street, at a crossroads, on top of a building. Talking about a city in the present, about the simplicity of its day-to-day life. Listening to its hum, its inner sound. Getting into step with it. Being alert, filled with constant amazement about the imaginative ways people find to live together. Wondering what makes a city, trying to understand its silent rules, its habits, its quirks, its difficulties, the unique ways in which it responds to the never-ending question: Where are we going? Aimless navigation without a compass, without a map, in the territory of the city, seeking for snatches of daily life, gestures, places, scenes that make a city what it is. Visual notes on what we scarcely look at: our ordinary urban practices, customs and habits, our behaviour, everything that escapes us and speaks of us, the inhabitants of our cities. **HOMO URBANUS**, but who are we in reality? What are we made of? What do we think about? How do we live? What kind of relationship to space have we developed? Space for one and space for all...but where is the frontier? What do we share? How do we relate to our peers? What forms does this take, where, and how? In the street, what do we allow others to see about ourselves and what do we seek to conceal? What is our relationship to time in a city? And how does that define us? What is our relationship not only with history and collective memory, but also with what is new? What meaning do we give to order, rules and standards? How is individual freedom constructed within them? What relationship do we develop with work, effort, fatigue, and the body? What place does money occupy in our lives? What about pleasure? Love? Spirituality? What about happiness? Can we talk about happiness?

These films explore our condition as a human animal and the way in which the city—this artificial environment that we build around us every day like an extension of our contemporary bodies—shapes and conditions us. Yaken on the fly, these visual notes look at urban man not only within his group but also in the depths of his solitude, redesigning the outlines of the city according to a kind of emotional geography. More than mapping out an area, the idea is to allow a city to speak through the ways in which it is used, in order to show the shifting nature of its human landscape and to understand what local singularities remain in the context of the wholesale globalisation of our urban lifestyles. By assembling these different films, this installation looks at cities as unique responses to the global challenge of living together.

Ila Bèka & Louise Lemoine



