



ZONE OUT // IN BETWEEN MODERN PARADISE // 1 LAUSANNE

Zone out
In Between
Modern Paradise

ZONE OUT

IN BETWEEN MODERN PARADISE

LAUSANNE

FOCUS WORK

**Walking as an architectural practice
exploring the actual territories**

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INTRODUCTION

We currently find ourselves in a reevaluation of architectural practice, significantly shaped by prevailing social and ecological concerns. This transformative phase has sparked a notable diversity in architectural approaches. As we contemplate the future roles of architects, questions naturally arise regarding the necessity to persist in construction. Does architectural practice remain fundamentally connected to the act of building?

In 1979, Andrey Tarkovsky released the movie «Stalker,» an adaptation of the book «Roadside Picnic,» published in 1972 by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky. Owing to Tarkovsky's renown, the resilience lessons from «Roadside Picnic» when facing neglected post-industrial spaces gained global traction, evolving into a cornerstone for landscape architecture theories.

The movie unfolds with a trio consisting of a scientific individual, a writer, and a guide called Stalker. Adhering to Stalker's guidance and engaging in rituals and specific behaviors toward the landscape, the other two are led through a post-industrial landscape named «The Zone.» The stalker personifies the landscape, assigning it a name, character, and history, and giving it unique powers. The film underscores an entirely new approach and relationship with our surroundings, seamlessly blending physical walks with personal psychic journeys. It introduces the theme of abandoned spaces as exit doors to society, serving as shelters for outsiders and a stage for self-expression.

Fast forward to the '90s, a group composed of Italian architecture students, sociologists, and writers, confronted the ascent of international-style architecture and systematic urban planning and decided to create a collective named Stalker. Their focus shifted to what they termed «actual territories» — the negative of the urban fabric. In 1993, the Stalker Collective initiated one of their pioneering projects: a 4-day walk through Rome's actual territories. This *in situ* experience, encompassing activities like sleeping, eating, and rituals, aimed to immerse participants in the heart of these spaces. It culminated in a manifesto defining walking as an architectural tool and articulating the essence of actual territories. By introducing the term «actual territories», the Stalker collective sought to establish a new category of spaces in the urban fabric, like the Zone, which unlike actual territories exists only in Tarkovsky's film «Stalker.»

In summary, while Tarkovsky's film laid the intellectual groundwork for walking and the initial exploration of abandoned spaces, the Stalker collective transformed these ideas into a comprehensive landscape theory. The main concept emerging from Stalker's manifesto is that it's only through *in situ* experience we can fully understand and define actual territories. Those Landscapes' hidden potentials are unveiled through the physical experience of walking through them.

Intrigued by these theories, I decided to test out this theory myself and create a series of magazines that try to develop a personal opinion overwalking as an architectural tool and the definition of actual territories. These magazines, featuring a mix of pictures and a board diary, attempt to convey my personal experiences and reflections while exploring and inhabiting actual territories in various cities and cultures.

Is walking inherently an architectural and spatial practice? Does the term «actual territories» possess an international definition, or is it confined to Rome's urban fabric? How do the context and culture shape and define this specific landscape? Is there an alternative conceptualization for them?

However, it's essential to keep in mind that those magazines are the product of personal framings and reflections, resulting in a subjective definition and manifesto. In fact, those magazine's true purpose is to inspire and invite you to explore these actual territories yourself, fostering your unique ideas and experiences.

MANIFESTO

Manifesto

The beauty of actual territories is that they are spaces of self-expression. Indeed, by being forgotten by the administration, these spaces are usually used as the stage for alternative political ideas and ways of living. Jumping into these landscapes is both a way of escaping from the system and entering a new world with its own rules and inhabitants.

Actual territories are important for the city's diversity. They represent exit doors spread around the urban fabric. They are rich with potential for experimentation, redefining alternative approaches to construction and life. I decided to write down a manifesto, giving you the tools necessary to make your own in situ experience. The idea would be to see this work as the start of an endless magazine series. A collection of data, relating to the current state of actual territories spreading all around us.

The Actual Territories

Referring to the architects of the Stalker collective, actual territories are «what forms the negative of the built-up city, interstitial and marginal areas, abandoned spaces, or spaces in the process of transformation.» In my interpretation, I would characterize these landscapes as spaces that are administratively forgotten. By being neglected, it gives them the possibility to escape the city's development plan. However, it's crucial not to perceive these places as no-man's-lands. Drawing a quick parallel between no-man's-land and actual territories is an oversimplified comparison. Actual territories can manifest in various forms and cannot be solely defined by the absence of inhabitants or users. On the contrary, even city districts can be deemed actual territories, as long as they seem to embody a marginalized way of living that contradicts the city's economic development.

Better than a definition

As you may have discerned, the definition of actual territories is diverse and can encompass an infinite number of potential locations. However, it appears that there's a fairly effective way to determine whether the place you're traversing is genuinely an actual territory. Regardless of their shape, actual territories evoke a distinct feeling. Actual territories are the antithesis of safety and familiarity. They are places that are «uncertain, to be discovered, generating a sensation of disorientation, a state of comprehension that leads to an intensification of perceptive capacities. Suddenly, the possibility of discovery and the fear of an unwanted encounter is everywhere» (Stalker's manifesto). I've personally undergone this overarching sense of disorientation, feeling strangely detached from the city while hearing the traffic and passers-by just a few meters away. Suddenly, uncertainty arises about whether you have the right to be there or not. After a certain point, a sense of freedom emerges, a feeling that you have the right to do anything you want. Similar to the movie Stalker, you suddenly realize that «Everything that happens here depends on us, not on the Zone» (Stalker, Andrey Tarkovsky).

Walking as a Cognitive Project

For me, the act of walking in these landscapes is a project in itself. Given that these places often lack everyday architectural features such as sidewalks, benches, beds, or paths, they compel you to develop new behaviors. Familiarity with these areas evolves through time spent there and experiences gained. Gradually, what was once an unclear path through tall grass becomes visible, hopping over a fence becomes second nature, and identifying where the fence is cut or finding a suitable spot for a break becomes increasingly instinctive. Architecture, to me, can be defined as behavior – the practice of uncovering the hidden potential of places. The experience of walking enhances this architectural aptitude and vision. In a context where construction is highly debatable, the skill of recognizing the existing potential of a place becomes a powerful architectural ability.

LAUSANNE

Lausanne

For the inaugural edition of Zone Out magazine, I choose to immerse myself deeply in insitu and inhabitus experiences, drawing on the advantage of having spent most of my life in this city. Given my childhood interest in these unique spaces, I didn't have much trouble organizing the itinerary for this trip.

In the end, I planned a loop of around 50 km. A 2-day journey, giving me the opportunity to experience living into actual territories. The choice of a solo trip enabled me to focus on my own sensations and reflections, without having to guide or be responsible for others. As a result, this edition is more oriented towards the territories themselves. The relationship between my body and the landscapes is only captured in certain points of my diary and a few pages showing moments of break, dinner preparation, or camp installation. However, the nostalgic aspect or the highly personal side of some of my texts can easily be felt, potentially making this edition the least objective one.

Lausanne's Actual Territories

A glance at the loop's map reveals that Lausanne's actual territories may not appear as significant spaces in terms of size and quantity. Some actual territories remain relatively small, and distinguishing them from the urban fabric isn't always straightforward. As I walked through them, I realized that the boundaries between actual territories and the surrounding city aren't always clear-cut. Lausanne's actual territories are seldom enclosed by fences, blending seamlessly into the city fabric and retaining their urban essence.

Media

For this first edition, I focused on taking pictures and accustomed myself to jotting down reflections. The photos were shot using two different cameras: a digital one (PENTAX K1, Mark II) and an analog one (PENTAX, N1000), loaded with a 35mm Kodak UltraMax 400iso film. Most of the pictures were captured using a 50mm/1.8f-22f lens. The development process was carried out using the Tetenal Colortec C-41 without any pull or push of the film stock.

Due to being written in situ, the texts may not be the most well-written texts you'll ever read. However, for the sake of the experience, I decided to keep them as close to the original as possible. In fact, I believe it adds a layer of information, highlighting moments when I was either stressed, bored, or tired along the journey.

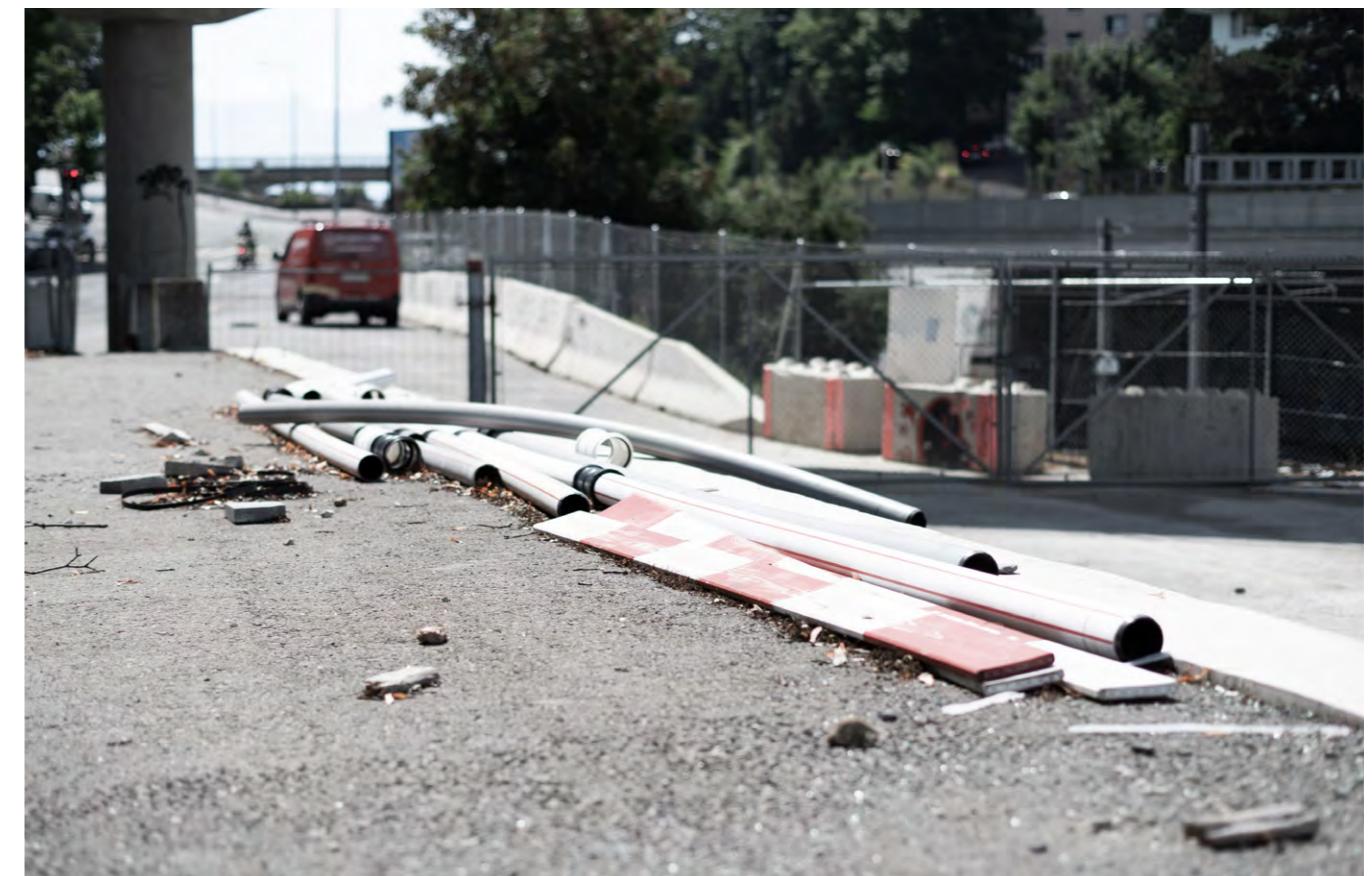
11:30 AM

I sat down on an unloading dock and took the opportunity to write a little. It's been over 3 hours since I started. I didn't want to leave home too early. The weather is hot and my bag is quite heavy. I'm not moving very fast. I'm already sweating a lot. But I don't think my slowness is due to my equipment or the weather. No, I think it's my mind that's holding me back. I don't know how to behave in these spaces. What should I shoot? I'm starting to be nervous about failing to capture the atmosphere of these spaces. Writing about this state of mind reassures me. It comforts me the idea that the spaces I've just passed through must be particular. They are probably kind of actual territories. In any case, I feel these are not average places I'm used to crossing.



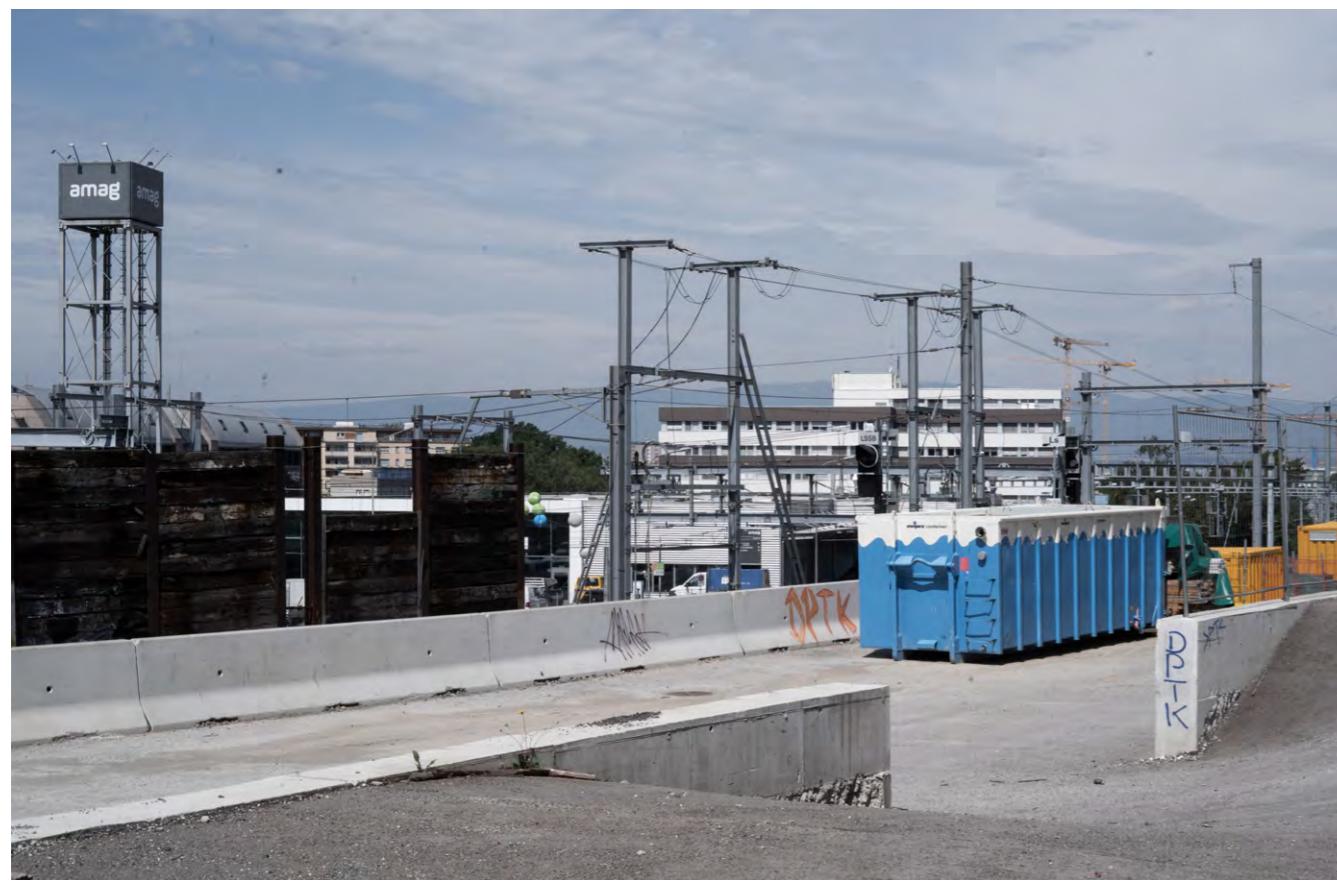


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CARNADIS
Viandes en Gros
ENTRÉE

THERMO KING



SL-200e

SL-200e





I had a rather unusual encounter. In the middle of nowhere, in between an abandoned car and a scooter, I saw a child's little red car.

I didn't immediately notice the presence of a couple and their little boy, who had taken shelter in the shade of the factory's eaves. The overexcited boy was running back and forth on the unloading dock, while his parents, leaning their backs against the wall, seemed to be enjoying a resting moment as if they were at the beach.



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A small gravel path led me directly to the abandoned tracks. This was the first time I had ventured onto railroads, at least for so long. I wasn't completely confident when I took my first steps, but as time went by I felt more and more comfortable and peaceful.

It's funny how my mind vacillates between the stress of being caught in the middle of these spaces and having to justify myself and the absolute comfort and peace these spaces provide me.



03:00 PM

Decidedly, I'm not very fast, but that's the way it is. I just hoped to reach the place I'd planned to spend the night before the night fell.

The Zone of Malley didn't disappoint me. As a Lausanne native, I remembered this immense space in between buildings and the railroads. For as long as I can remember, it always has been unused.

I mean, once the LHC's temporary ice rink was located there, but the brand-new rink on the other side of the tracks has since been refurbished.

However, the Zone is not empty. In fact, I was surprised to see quite a few people there. A big top has been installed, and young people seem to be introduced to the art of circus.





28



29





A temporary bar called La Galicienne is also set up there.

A little further on, a kind of Mongolian-inspired yurt was one of the many temporary shelters for homeless people.

A cargo in the middle of the space is covered with an advertising picture showing refugees sleeping outside. On top of it, you can read the slogan «The tireless quest for paradise.».

The place has a strange aesthetic, especially the ground. It's a mixte of gravel, wooden plank paths, and small asphalt sections.

It's a chaotic mess, filled with elements of building sites and ephemeral construction, which can be the result of spontaneous planning.

Despite its many issues, the city of Lausanne has the advantage (if you can call it that way) of being fairly indifferent to the random appropriation of its non-spaces. At least as long as its installations remain ephemeral and the city doesn't see the financial potential of developing those sites.





LA QUÊTE INFATIGABLE DU PARADIS

Toto, 2h55 du matin, le 3 septembre, Lausanne 2013

03:45 PM

I'm writing from an abandoned logistics building. I hadn't planned to visit, but I'm glad I found it along my way. I wanted to find a way to get inside the building but I didn't. Doesn't matter.

I sat down on the facade overlooking the railroad.

I find the ideal place to rest for a while. I needed it, carrying all my gear, sleeping bag, camera, tripod, etc... is exhausting. I feel much more comfortable in these abandoned places rather than in wide-open spaces.

I took off my T-shirt, so I could let it dry out a bit. I was sweating so much with my backpack on.



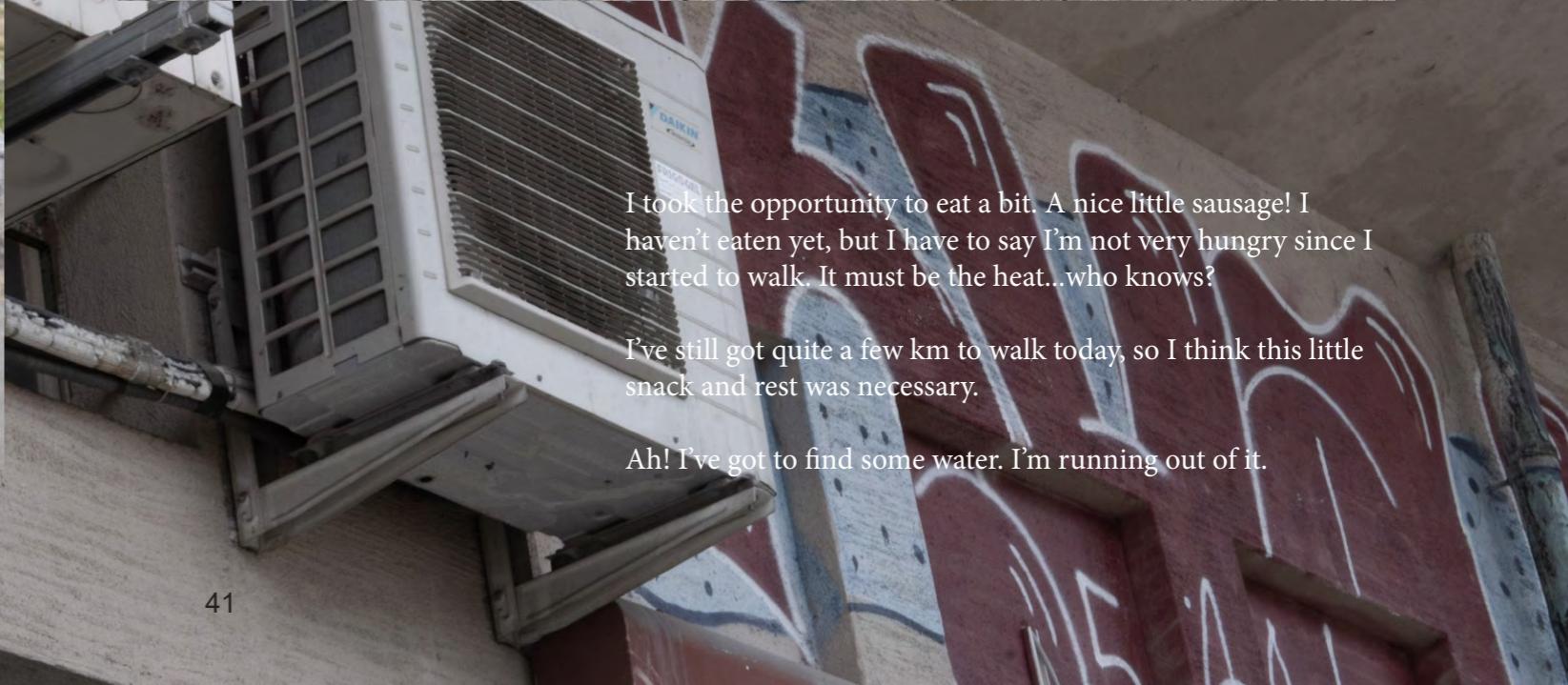




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I took the opportunity to eat a bit. A nice little sausage! I haven't eaten yet, but I have to say I'm not very hungry since I started to walk. It must be the heat..who knows?

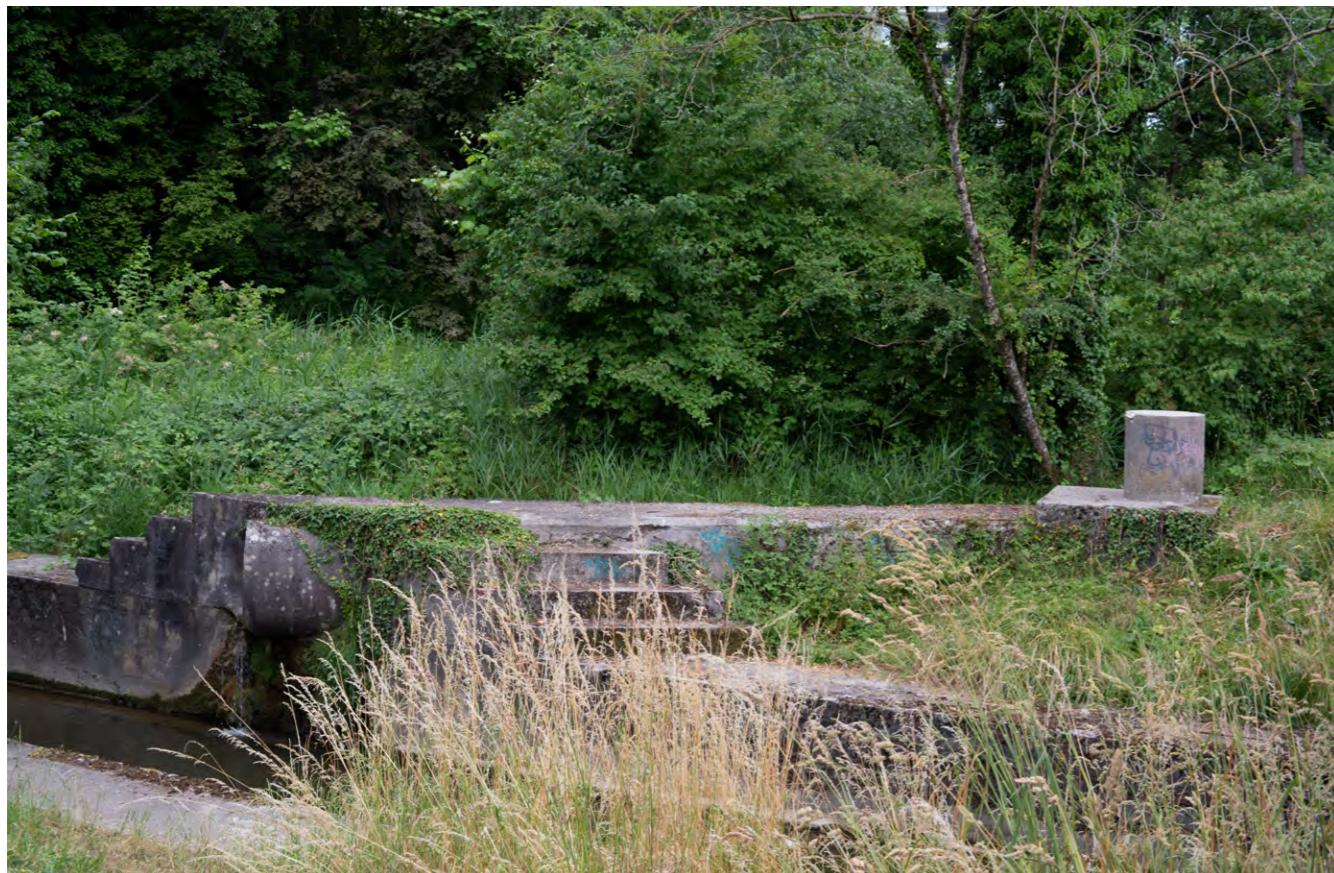
I've still got quite a few km to walk today, so I think this little snack and rest was necessary.

Ah! I've got to find some water. I'm running out of it.



04:30 PM

I crossed one of my favorite areas since the begining of my journey. I already knew it because I'd had to study the river that runs through it, la Mébre. This Space is incredible, you have to leave the urban fabric and venture out into the tall grass. Soon, the presence of a few reclining brandies marks out a path for you. It leads you into a much denser patch of vegetation. It's like a little wild forest, which you can follow as you walk along the fence that separates you from the highway.



Further along, the vegetation gradually gives way, unveiling la Mébre. This river embodies a unique fusion of nature and machinery, with its concrete edges merging seamlessly with the river's greenery. The intriguing contrast of these elements has always captivated me. Interestingly, due to its somewhat unnatural aesthetic, most locals living nearby forget that it is right next to them.

Next to la Mébre, the vegetation completely vanishes, revealing an expansive field of tall grass and wheat. This area serves as a flood zone, activated in case of heavy rains.

Unexpectedly in the heart of this Zone, a bench and a green waste bin appear, seemingly out of nowhere.

The bench isn't strategically positioned for a specific view. It's just there in the

middle of nowhere, for any particular reason.

Rediscovering this place was uplifting; it had been a while since my last visit. I find the landscape here utterly intriguing. It is such a particular, beautiful hidden space. Reflecting on it, I've frequently passed by this bench, yet oddly enough, I've never sat on it. It seems more like a landscape to traverse than a spot to linger. Perhaps another time.





09:00 PM

I went through the center of Renens. I seized the opportunity to purchase some water. It was a good call since I had been without it for an hour already. The weather had noticeably cooled down, and at one point, I even thought it might rain. Fortunately, that wasn't the case. I didn't take any rain gear and a camp ill-equipped for rain, so I considered myself lucky.

I chose to stop for the night in the elevated areas of Renens, which is also a region next to the river la Mébre. I am right next to another flood zone. it's a much smaller one tho. Familiarity with the area played a role in my decision to set up camp here; it provides a sense of comfort, I guess.

I reached this location at around 7 PM. Deliberately avoiding an early arrival at my campsite, I was concerned about the potential of being bored.

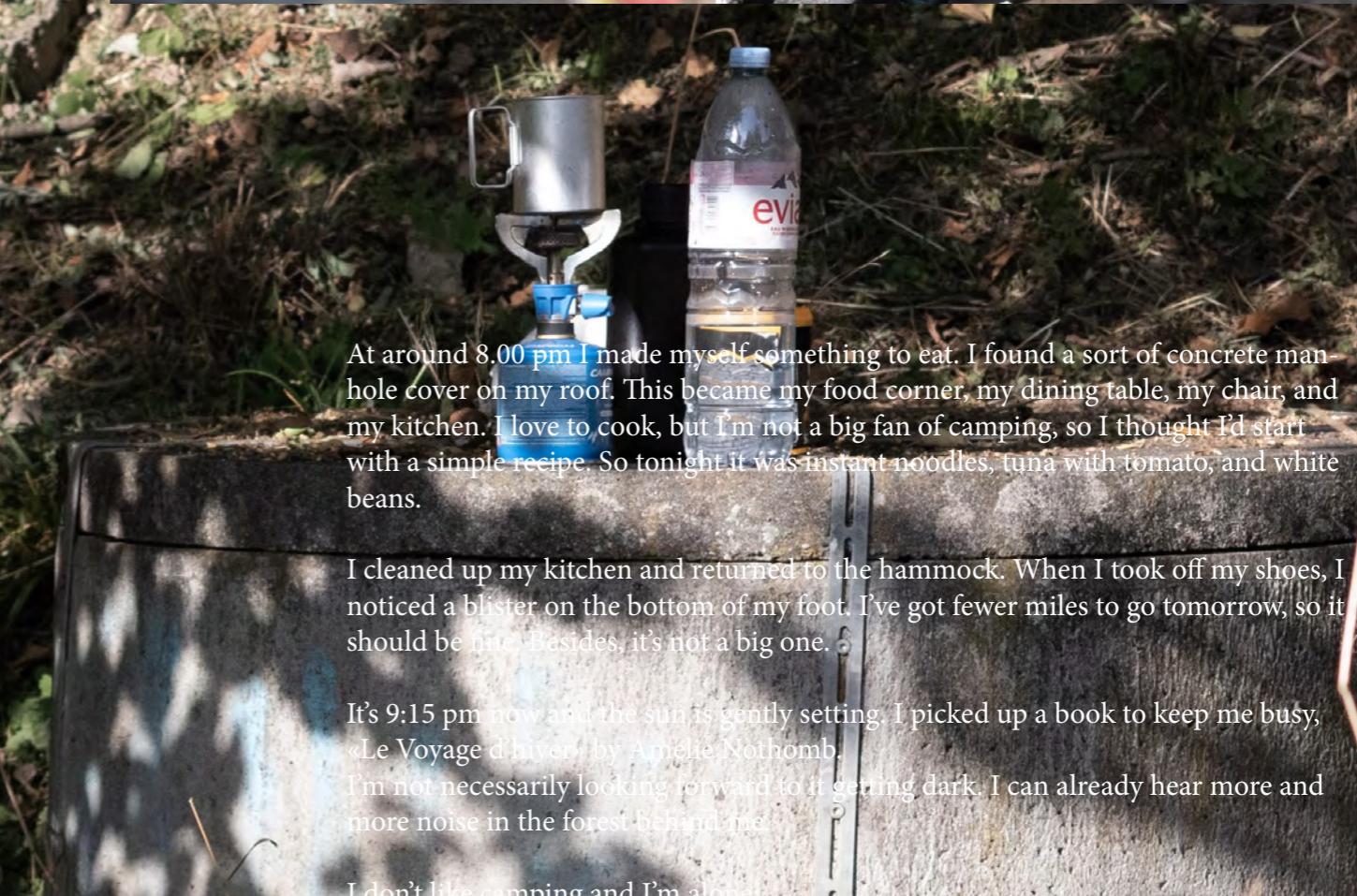
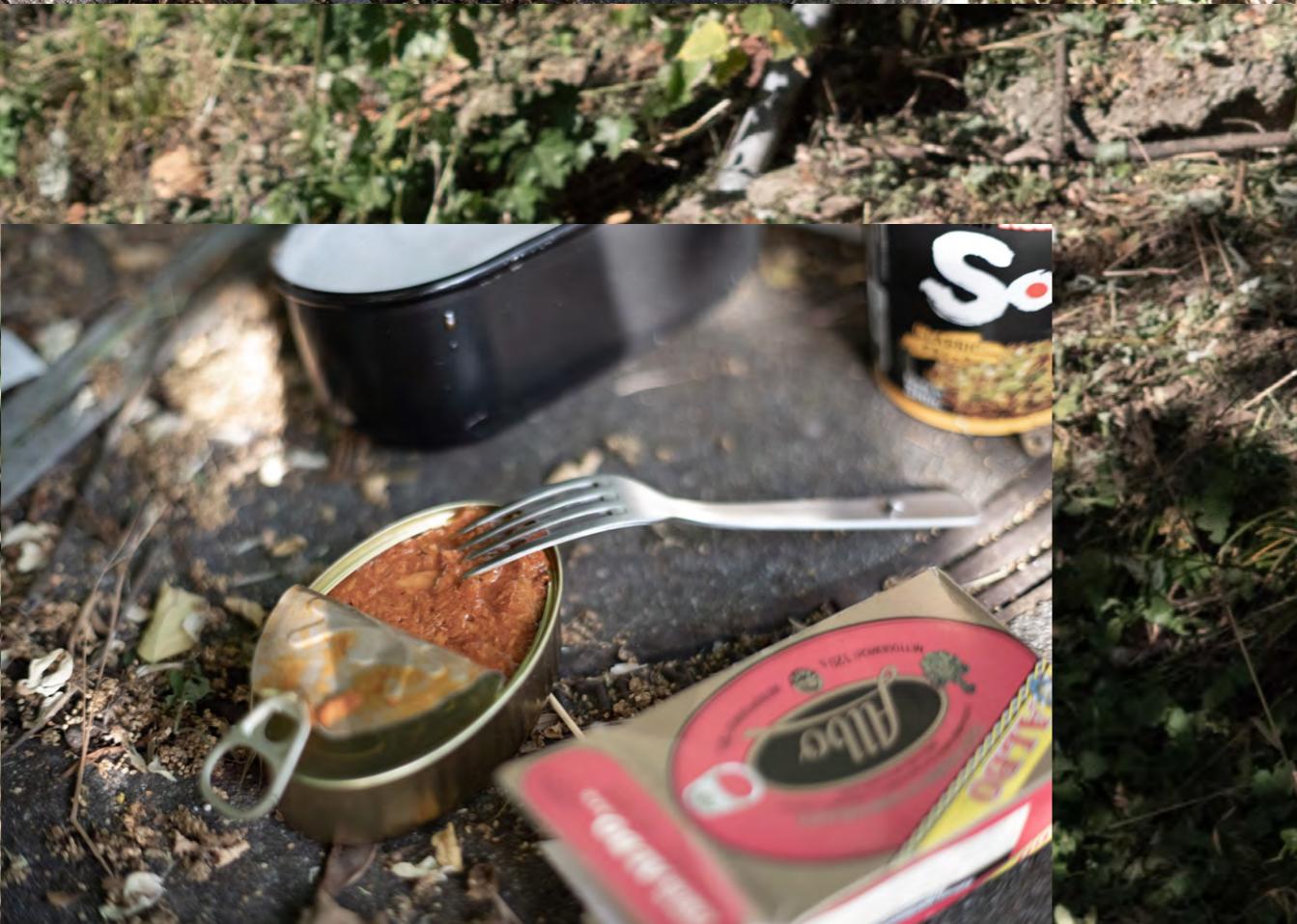




to be more specific, I set up the camp on the roof of a small waterworks.

The roof is vegetated with dry grass and a few small trees. The vegetation being much less dense than the surrounding forest, it seemed the perfect place to set up my hammock. I've managed to stretch

it sufficiently, which I'm quite happy about. The place is reassuring for the moment. I'm higher than the flood zone and any possible passersby. The roof space is clear and on a human scale. I almost feel like I'm in a living room. Moreover, the space is completely enclosed. It's reassuring. I feel like I'm protected.



At around 8.00 pm I made myself something to eat. I found a sort of concrete man-hole cover on my roof. This became my food corner, my dining table, my chair, and my kitchen. I love to cook, but I'm not a big fan of camping, so I thought I'd start with a simple recipe. So tonight it was instant noodles, tuna with tomato, and white beans.

I cleaned up my kitchen and returned to the hammock. When I took off my shoes, I noticed a blister on the bottom of my foot. I've got fewer miles to go tomorrow, so it should be fine. Besides, it's not a big one.

It's 9:15 pm now and the sun is gently setting. I picked up a book to keep me busy, «Le Voyage d'hiver» by Amélie Nothomb. I'm not necessarily looking forward to it getting dark. I can already hear more and more noise in the forest behind me.

I don't like camping and I'm alone.

05:20 AM

The night was horrible. When it got dark, the place took on a whole new atmosphere. It was so creepy. The surrounding fence that seemed to protect me during the day had become more of a prison. I began to think that if someone came into my space at night, then I'd never be able to escape. In short, I was definitely becoming paranoid.

The little forest behind me was full of small animals that kept moving leaves and making noise. Several foxes live nearby. The screams of these animals are frightening. They sound like people having their throats slit while trying to shout. Come to think of it, it's similar to Agent Starling's trauma in the film Silence of the Lambs (for those of you who have seen it).

I took a series of pics. I had never taken a night shot with a torch. It kept me busy. At around 2 AM, I managed to get some sleep.

Now the sun is already rising nicely.

I'm going to pack my stuff and leave. I don't want to sleep anymore.

I just want to leave.







10:15 AM

After I left this morning, I stopped off at a service station for a coffee. It did me good. I stayed a while leaning against the plastic table of the terrace.

I arrived at around 10 AM on the new Zone. It's the roof of Lausanne's public transport hall. Lausanne is a city with a lot of hills and slopes. This roof connects two districts, each located on a different hill. Basically, it's a bridge.



62



63





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It's practically in the heart of Lausanne, between some of the most densely populated districts of the city center, and since then, no sustainable project has ever really been built on this gigantic roof. Yes, there was an attempt to turn it into a playground. It's ended in failure.

It seems that some areas of the city are condemned to remain unused.

Nevertheless, I saw a little girl being chased by her brother, who was running from one neighborhood to another.

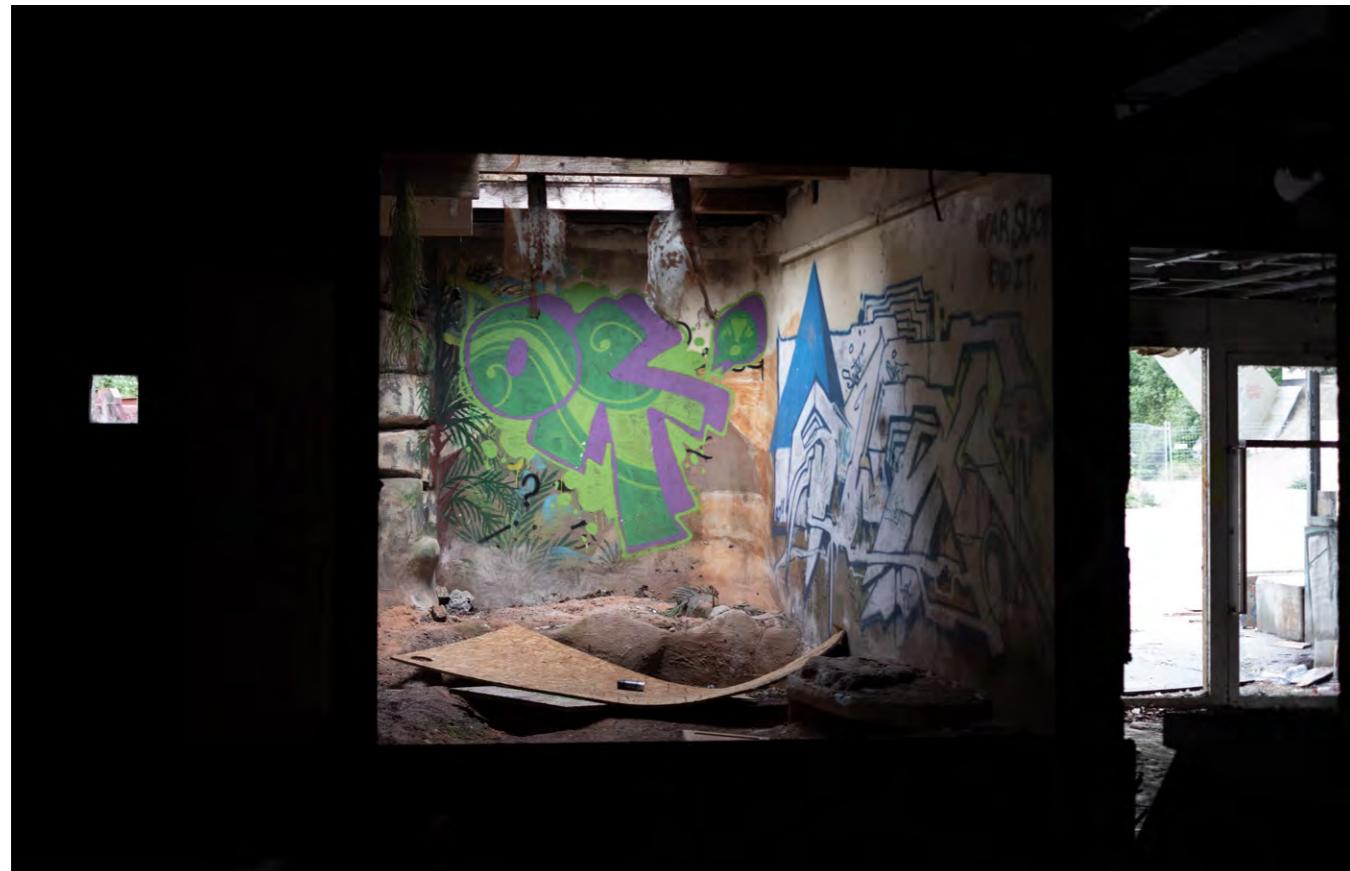
Bellecour in Love Solidarité
avec les Bossen





On the way to my next location, I decided to visit the old vivarium. I knew it had been abandoned since it caught fire a few years ago, but I'd never had the chance to go back.

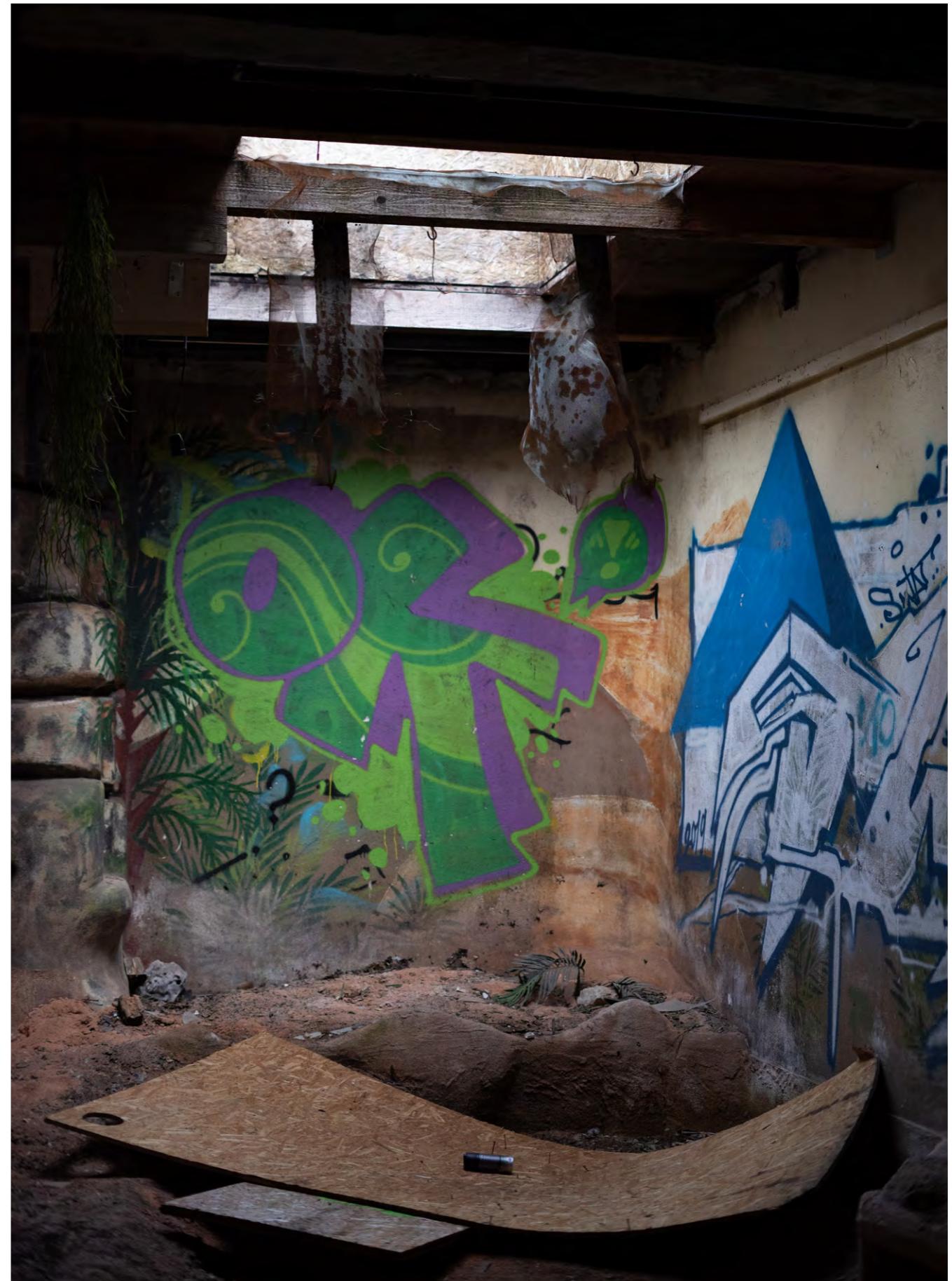




In front of the entrance, skateboarders have built a small concrete ramp. It's nice. People have to use the place a little.

The interior is covered with TAGs. Even the inside of the old reptile cages are graffitied. I was surprised not to find any sleeping bags or traces of human life. Maybe you feel a bit too lost in nature here.

I am sitting in the varan's old cage. It makes me laugh to be in the home of the animal I observed as a child.





03:30 PM

I've finally finished walking. I sat down on a bench in Vallon. But I'll write about this area later.

Immediately after the vivarium, I reached the location I had planned. It's just under the large highway bridge that runs north of Lausanne.

As a rule, the space under bridges is often strange. But this one beats my personal record. However, this Zone is not in the middle of nowhere. It's right next to the Boisonnet district of northern Lausanne.





I don't know what's going on over there, but all the building site fences suggest to me that they are building something under this bridge.

In fact, this area has been the same for years, always the same piles of reddish-brown earth forming small mounds. From a distance, I spotted an old man. He was digging up the soil to harvest bits

for his garden. He explained that his vegetable garden was full of phosphate and that he needed to change his garden soil.

He concluded by «There's enough here. I've got the right to take some. Haven't I?».



Is it the main definition of actual territories? spaces where the field of possibilities expands. As in the movie Stalker, the Zone is what you want it to be.

But faced with this sudden freedom, the passer-by who crosses through these spaces has doubts. Do I have the right to be there?

I've often asked myself the same question as this old man as I was walking through those actual territories. But hearing it from someone else reinforces my understanding of these specific spaces.





I made my way down along the Flon River. The rivers of Lausanne are the city's great forgotten landmarks.

The areas where they are not buried have a special atmosphere. There's always this sort of uncontrolled natural vegetation and the presence of pipes that come from who knows where, walls or concrete infrastructures, and electrical pillars.



NE PAS TOUCHER LES FILS
DANGER DE MORT
PYLÔNE SIL No 3
ANNÉE DE POSÉ: 1998
EN CAS DE DANGER
TELEPHONER AU
N° 021 515 85 75

carhartt



I arrived in the Vallon district. That's where I'm writing from. I wanted to end with this district because I had the feeling before my walk that the Vallon could be considered an actual territory. Let me explain why.

The area is inhabited and is not a no-man's-land, but it has to be said that it has been largely forgotten by the city of Lausanne. It's located in Lausanne's hypercentre, yet no development project for this former industrial district has been planned.



90



91



On my way down, I saw a billboard with the word «wasteland» on it. In reality, the neighborhood was meeting to find out what they could do together in certain neglected areas of the neighborhood.

I've never really understood why this neighborhood never developed further. I know it well, having lived next door to it until I was 22.

On the one hand, it's important to look at the positive side of the city's neglect. The neighborhood has been spared gentrification. For the time being, it remains a neighborhood of social housing and the famous Marmotte (homeless shelter).

To me, this neighborhood is a perfect

example of an actual territory. A sort of forgotten part of the city, with its own rules, created by those who live there.

Along this two-day walk, and as I was crossing those landscapes, I started to understand that actual territories can be very diverse. They're not no-man's-lands... inhabited or not, used or not, it doesn't matter. Actual territories are anomalies in the urban fabric. Spaces that escape from the logical and economic development of cities.

Administratively forgotten moments.



