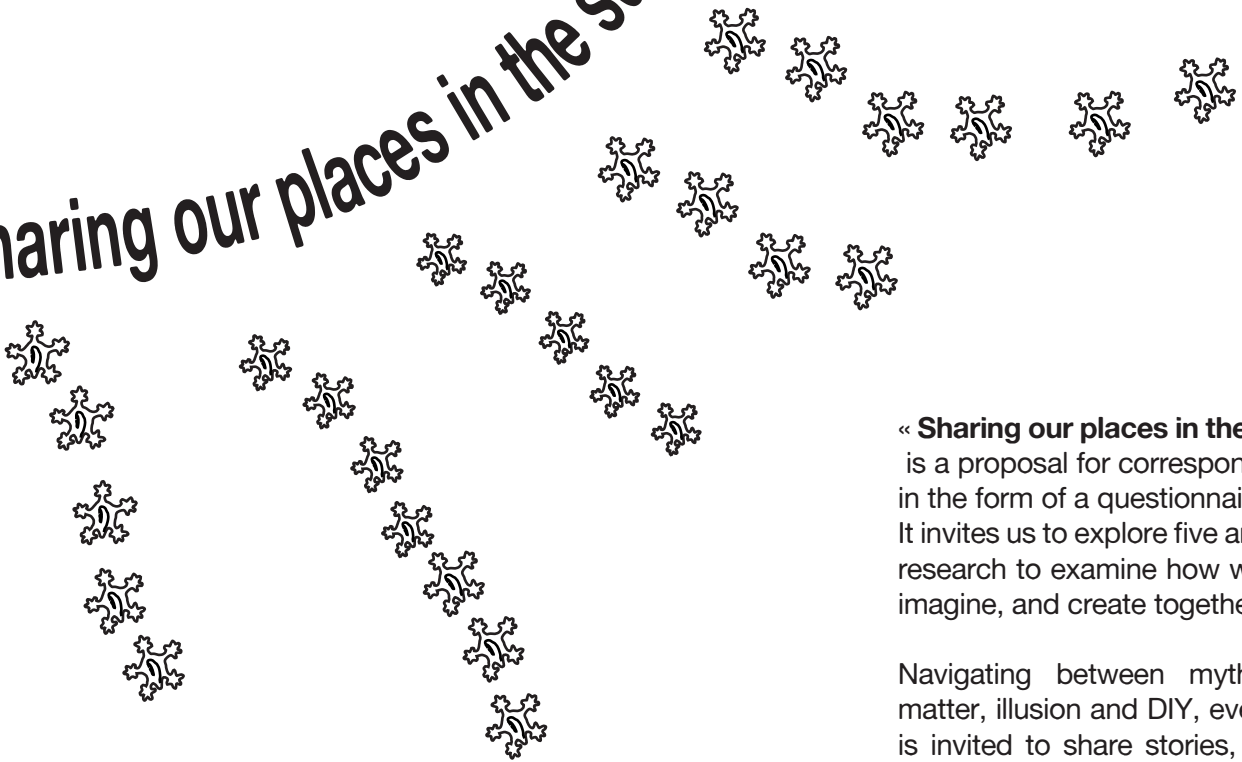


Sharing our places in the sun



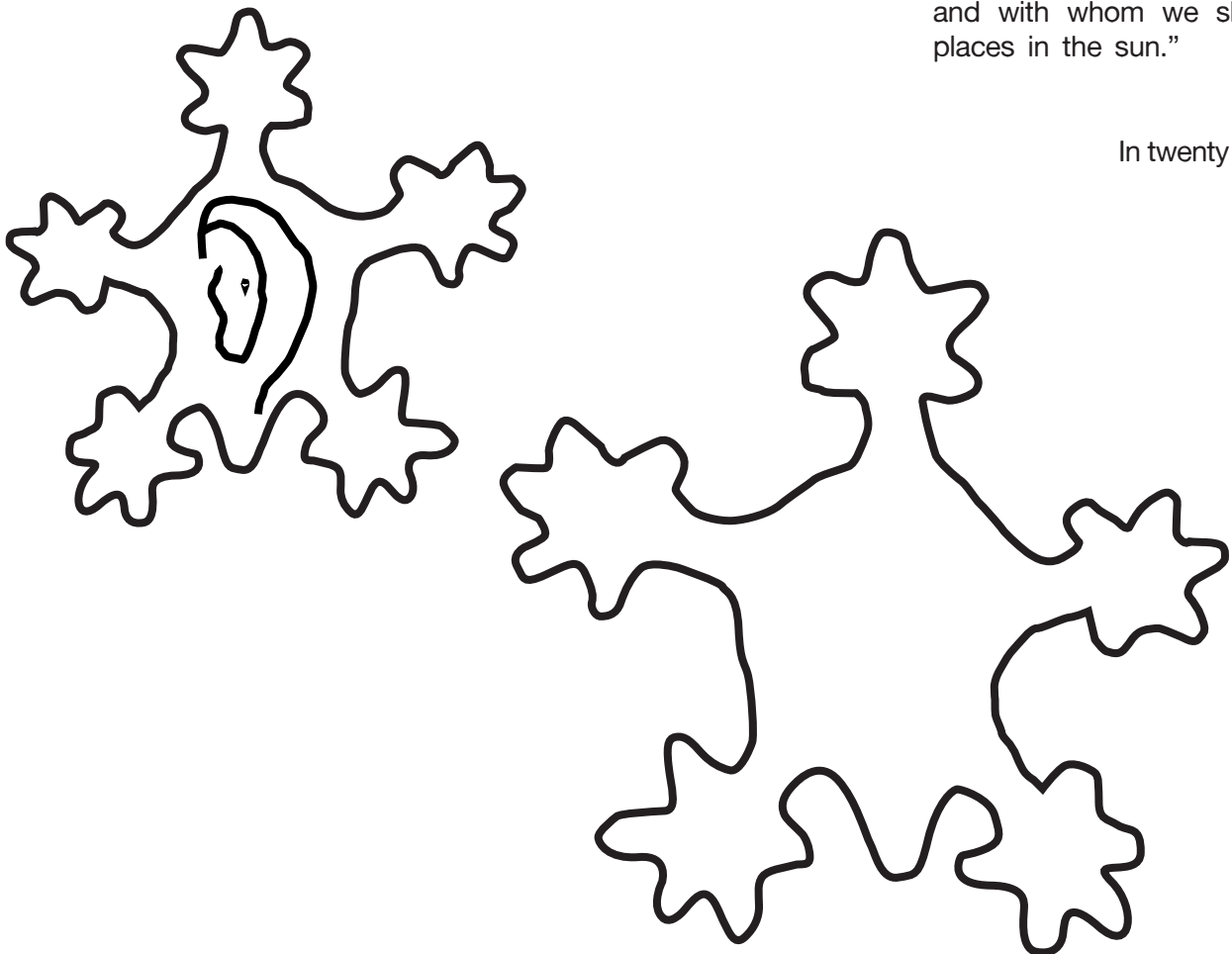
« **Sharing our places in the sun** »
is a proposal for correspondence
in the form of a questionnaire.
It invites us to explore five areas of
research to examine how we live,
imagine, and create together.

Navigating between myth and
matter, illusion and DIY, everyone
is invited to share stories, invent
forms, confront contradictions,
and find strength in fears.

It is a journey in which each stroke
becomes part of a chimera—a
creature that we create, nurture,
and with whom we share “our
places in the sun.”

In twenty questions

:)



Hi,

My name is Wilfried, I'm an visual artist currently in residence at BASE Milano. Here is an introduction to my project with some essential information to help you understand my request and my approach. It will also allow you to contribute, if you wish, by answering a series of questions.

There are a total of twenty questions that require different answers, using various response methods. In most cases, this will be in writing, although some questions will ask you to draw. Don't panic, the drawings are not meant to be a technical challenge. A simple sketch, doodle or rough draft is sufficient and welcome.

Relax, nothing has to be perfect, just intentional.

Let's talk about the project. It's called 'Sharing our places in the sun'. It's a proposal for correspondence and discussions with individuals, like you, whom I meet. The subject is about living and doing things together. How do we do that ? What do we share and what enables us to maintain relationships over time ? Can we share a sunny spot that belongs to no one ?

Sharing our places in the sun is a more open, welcoming and hospitable rephrasing of the expression 'making a place for oneself in the sun', often associated with issues of individual social success, violence, competition and the illusion of struggling in a saturated space from which one has to stand out. Similarly, this expression took on meaning in the 20th century related to the desire to possess and seize more land under colonial regime, and consequently under domination.

That being said, the proposal to share our places in the sun is not so easy and accessible, because sharing requires us to receive and welcome, and then eventually to be transformed by it. What is certain is that, on both sides — the one who receives and the one who welcomes — we use the same word : host.

But if our spaces are increasingly fragmented by authoritarian, capitalist and fascist systems that harm us because they separate us, divide us, reduce our spaces for encounter and impoverish our relationships with others, how can we be confident ? How can we maintain confidence ? How can we stay connected ? So what are the means and methods for maintaining our ways of living and doing things together ?

Through the following questions, I invite you to share your voices, made up of your experiences, feelings, stories, opinions, advices, and imaginations. The content of the questions may be consulted and read in a public context or a private one. Objects such as publications and small sculptures created from a combination of drawings may be produced to document and disseminate what has been shared. Nothing you write will be altered. The information you provide will not be used in any context other than this project.

The content of your answers can remain anonymous. Otherwise, you can write your first names, surnames, or nicknames somewhere on the page so that they can be mentioned if necessary. You can also leave me your email address, which it could be useful to send you information if there is a follow-up to this project.



Thanks in advance for your valuable time.

PS: The following pages contain additional information and a lexicon to clarify the context and terms used to answer the questions

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Additional information

• **Wilfried Dsainbayonne** • Born to a white French mother and a black Congolese father, I came into the world on Monday, 5 April 1993, in Lille.

My mixed heritage is marked by contradictions inherited from a Western capitalist, colonialist and patriarchal system, which would have black individuals be the archetype of the 'savage' who can be dominated, while white individuals would be the archetype of the 'modern', in a position of domination. My heritage bears the marks of these oppositions, which imprison both bodies and imaginations. Faced with these rigid frameworks, I choose to navigate into the "in-between" and the "thresholds". My main question is how multiple identities are constructed, narrated and can have multiple positions to be, to speak and so on.

These are fragile spaces, full of fault lines, but rich in methods for sustaining living and doing together in a world of fragmented spaces. My work seeks to dissolve the authoritarian forms that organise our lives, relying on decolonial thinking and theories of care. I also draw on the world of affects, symbolic, spiritual and mystical forms that escape rationalisation and require attention to the invisible.

In this research, manufacturing plays a key role: I'm considering it as a way of being in the world, as a way of thinking and inventing, searching ways to come within the scope of reality. As such, my body of work seeks to propose new forms of connection and coexistence through the work, through the question of the signatories and through the nature of the work itself.

• **Base Milano** • A project promoting innovation and cultural contamination, located in the heart of Milan's Zona Tortona, at V. Ambrogio Bergognone da Fossano, 34, 20144 Milano MI.

With 12,000 square metres, over three floors, more than 200 creative residences, over 400 events and 500,000 visitors per year, BASE is an international creative hub and a centre for research, experimentation, production and co-production of cultural initiatives with high social value.

For the period from 2023 to 2025, BASE has chosen to commit to countering forms of racialisation and cultural colonialism, ableism and gender discrimination through the Same But Different programme, which promotes the principles contained in the acronym I.D.E.A. (inclusion, diversity, equity, access).

• **Artist residency** • As part of an artist's work, residency programmes are open to them by applying for calls for applications. These are similar to job offers, even though no employment contract is drawn up. Instead, a grant is awarded, providing money to develop a project. Residencies are based on too few common standards. It is therefore possible to find a wide variety of options in terms of remuneration, but also in terms of the resources allocated.

• **The ear shape with five stars around it** • This shape that appears throughout the document is a drawing I made. I created it while thinking about what "*Sharing our places in the sun*" could represent to me, knowing the applications contexts and the framework in which I wanted to use it.

As I wondered how I would carry out this User-friendly research — with whom, and how — the idea of making a tool came to me. At the same time, I thought of the sigil.

The term comes from the Latin sigillum, meaning "signature." These are graphic forms that hold meanings. When considered as a signature, it expresses an intention and also allows an identification form to the person who created it.

I also cast this shape in metal. this tool helped me structure the project. I see it as a key that allowed me to define the five vectors I am presenting here, but above all, see it as a method to locate five research areas.

Placed on a map, the five stars from the shape correspond to five locations in the city, each representing a potential meeting point. This tool guided me through this area, and it makes you one of the five stars in this research.

• **The Framework** • This research is being part of a research residency at BASE Milano. It has been made possible thanks to the Nouveau Grand Tour programme run by the French Institute in Italy and the french embassy. My research seeks to highlight forms of community organisation, methods of sharing and ways of participating in the creation of spaces that leave places for others.

In any way it seek to obscure the struggles against oppressive systems that are taking place around the world. Possession, domination, violence and crime must be condemned.

It is also important to remember that consent should not be overlooked.

Let's take care of you, let's take care of us.



• **Visual Artist** • A visual artist created artworks which can be appreciated during exhibitions or art-related events. The means of expression used are diverse : drawing, painting, sculpture, video, sound, publishing, performance, etc. An artist is an art worker. As such, even if their work is not remunerated at its true value and is not recognised as work like any other profession, they are individuals who produce wealth. As such, they are part of a market that produces value and employment.

• **The research** • Research is a framework that aims to produce ideas and knowledge in various application fields. It does not involve the same methods depending on investigation context. Here, we are talking about research in art. This aims to produce thought in a chosen form, reconciling theory and artistic practice. It combines and allows for more sensitive approaches, which are certainly less based on concrete and proven data and facts.

• **User-friendly research** • For Ivan Illich, conviviality refers to a society's ability to enable everyone to act with others, rather than on others. It is a way of organising the world in which tools, knowledge and institutions remain on a human scale, accessible, shareable, and do not create domination.

In a convivial society, individuals can co-act, invent, manufacture and repair together; they remain in control of their actions and relationships. Illich contrasts conviviality with industrial or bureaucratic systems that deprive people of their know-how, their autonomy and their power to invent.

Conviviality is therefore an ethic of sharing, of 'making do', where we cultivate non-extractive relationships, spaces for mutual learning, and a sensitive relationship with the world and with others. This can be found in his book *Tools for Conviviality*, written in 1973.

• **A quest** • A quest is a search for something. We can use it to refer to more abstract, spiritual things, such as "the quest for truth". It is a term often used in video games and involves completing a mission, overcoming obstacles, solving puzzles that stand in our way, and ultimately obtaining a reward: money, experience, or an object.

• **Make a place for oneself in the sun** • Often associated with issues of individual social success, violent and competitive. This expression means to have achieved an enviable, comfortable social or professional position. This success is based on years of effort and struggle towards personal fulfillment.

In the 20th century, it was used by the German Empire in a speech by Foreign Minister Bernhard von Bülow on December 6, 1897, and by Kaiser Wilhelm II in a speech on June 18, 1901. In these speeches, the expression "make a place for oneself in the sun" referred to a desire for colonial conquest. So during the 1890s, the German Empire "established itself" in China and the Middle East and we established relations.

Source : Wikipédia

• **Living and doing together** • This is what I consider to be the ability of a group or community to share a space, time, and common goals while respecting each individual's uniqueness. It means learning to coexist, collaborate, and produce collective forms that do not render differences invisible, but rather make them compatible, active, and nourishing.

• **A world of fragmented spaces** • This is how I see the world today, where places, experiences, and people no longer truly come together. Social, geographical, symbolic spaces— —are fragmented into small islands that coexist without touching each other. Everyone evolves within their own territory, codes, and narratives, often separated by tangible or intangible boundaries. We share the same world, but rarely the same spaces. In my opinion, this impoverishes our relationships with others, our ways of being together, of creating them and of perceiving them.

• **Domination** • This refers to the exercise of authority over a third party through methods and means that enslave, belittle, or make the other person feel inferior. This relationship is considered toxic. This principle persists and can be found in several contexts, whether political, economic, social, gender-based, or class-based.

• **Colonial** • The word colonial refers to everything related to colonies and colonialism, i.e., a political, economic, and cultural system in which a state, the colonizing power, imposes its domination on a foreign territory «the colony», and on the populations living there.

It refers to the practices, institutions, representations, and power structures that shape this relationship of subjugation : extraction resources, transformation of lifestyles, racial hierarchies, taxation, and the erasure of local languages, knowledge, and the original culture of the peoples who cultivate land.

• For further reading : The term comes from the Latin *colonia*, which originally referred to a settlement of Roman colonists on conquered territory—a place where the land was cultivated (from *colere*, “to cultivate, to inhabit”) and where Rome's presence was extended. This root conveys the idea of a population being moved to control foreign land, and of a political organization that subordinates the occupied territory to the metropole. From the 16th century onwards, with the rise of the European empires, the term acquired its modern meaning : a large-scale enterprise of expansion, domination, and exploitation.

The word colonial has also been used in architecture in a very concrete sense : moving a structure from one place to another to signify or extend power. In ancient times, particularly during the Roman Empire, it was common practice to dismantle and reinstall columns, statues, and porticos in new colonies.

This gesture had two main functions : to import the aesthetics, style, and symbolic order of the mainland; and to create a “little Rome” elsewhere, physically and visually inscribing domination. Architecture thus became a sign of power, a way of leaving a structural imprint, almost like a seal. Moving a column meant moving its origin, its symbolic anchor, to reestablish it elsewhere and impose it.

• **Décolonial** • A term that refers to a way of thinking and acting aimed at undoing the persistent presence of colonialism in our actions, institutions, and imaginations. Inspired by thinkers such as Françoise Vergès and Olivier Marboeuf, it is not just a matter of analyzing the past, but of opening up spaces where other narratives, other ways of life, attention, and care become possible.

Decolonialism is neither an aesthetic nor a label : it is a way of reconfiguring the world from the margins, from the invisible and the silenced voices—by rebuilding connections, reinventing practices, and making perceptible what coloniality had rendered inaudible. It is a struggle situated from the margins against the forms of categorization, classification, and registration that perpetuate relations of domination.

For more information, have a look to writing from Françoise Vergès, Olivier Marboeuf, Frantz Fanon, Maryse Condé, Bell Hooks and so many more you could find associated to these persons.

• **Chimera** • In Greek mythology, a chimera is a hybrid creature made up of parts from different beings : often described as having the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a snake. It is neither a single species nor a coherent being, but an unlikely composition, born from the assembly of forms that were not meant to coexist. It is a multifaceted figure that embodies the power of the imagination, confusion, and excess : a creature that is part myth, part dream, and part excess.

In my project, the chimera can be understood as a relational form—a composite structure, made up of a set of fragments that each person contributes by answering questions. We are therefore all participating in the creation of a chimera. It is multifaceted, embraces diversity, and is not a smooth, perfect ideal structure. Rather, it is wobbly and strange, making place for otherness. It is a figure that I want to be non-obvious, one that rubs against constant friction, struggle, tinkering, and work, potentially serving as a means to reestablish coexistence and interdependent relationships.

• **Vector** • I chose to use this word because of its link to mathematics. It can be represented by a line, a segment that leads in a certain direction but can also mark what lies between two points. The words “axis” and “part” were options. However, I didn’t entirely like these words.

In vector, I find that there is a logic of transmitting documents and information that I like better in relation to my intentions. There is a notion of back-and-forth that I like better. Within this project are five vectors, each containing five texts. These texts provide context and introduce the series of questions that follow. These vectors can be associated with chapters. I mention them again below for clarity.

Vector 01 : Together in a world of fragmented spaces, what we know ?

Vector 02 : Does it truly exist or are we chasing a mirage ?

Vector 03 : Melt it until you make it, which components do we use ?

Vector 04 : Join forces with contradictions, shall we sign the pact ?

Vector 05 : What does one chimera say to another chimera ?

● Together in a world of fragmented spaces, what we know ?

In a world of fragmented spaces, of life pieces that brush against each other without always coming together, where connections disperse as quickly as they are created, living and doing things together becomes an almost fragile issue. It requires observing how, despite cracks, we try to create shared gestures : sharing a table, a street, a project, a breath, a laugh, a discussion.

Vector 01 focuses on these small cohabitation experiences that already exist, sometimes discreet, often essential, where everyone can share how they have tried to inhabit space with others.

1. When you think about “living and doing things together,” what images come to mind ? Can you describe these images in a few lines, or even draw them ?

2. For you, what makes a group, a community, or a family strong—even in a very simple way ? Are you part of communities, groups, or families, or are you more of a loner ? Are there any role models who inspire you ? Can you share them ?

• •

Based on these stories, this second theme questions the very nature of living and doing things together. Is it a reality, or rather a myth that attracts us, guides us, and that we continue to follow even when it fades into the distance ?

Perhaps this myth allows us to move forward, perhaps it deceives us. Vector 02 invites us to gently question : to recognize the illusions, beliefs, and hopes that make up our desire to live together.

1. Have you ever believed you were part of a “we,” a “whole,” before realizing that it might have been just an impression ? Can you describe this shift in a few lines ?

2. Is there a moment in your daily life when you doubt the existence of living and doing things together, and therefore the real possibility of achieving it ? Do you have a story to share in a few lines ?

● ● ● Melt it until you make it, which components do we use ?

If it is indeed an illusion, perhaps we can choose to invent and create our own illusory places in order to continue believing in them. Here, everything melts away, transforms, recombines. It is a space where we shape things together : a disparate assemblage made up of different materials, stories, objects, gestures.

Vector 03 seeks what each person could contribute : parts of themselves, traces, materials, and forms necessary to give birth to a heterogeneous entity that would allow us to live together. To do this, we invoke a figure from Greek mythology : a chimera, a hybrid creature made up of pieces of different beings.

1. If you could offer a part of yourself—a skill, a habit, a memory, a story, a flaw, a fear, or a joy—to contribute to the creation of a chimera, which would you choose? And why those fragments rather than others?

2. Who else, known or unknown, would you ask to help make this fantasy come true ? Why would you choose these people ?

5. Can you draw a part of this chimera of your choice : an organ, an architectural element, an invention, something that would help give it shape ?

● ● ● ● Join forces with contradictions, shall we sign the pact ?

Forming a chimera means accepting that it is imperfect, riddled with constant friction, made up of coexisting imperfections. Vector 04 questions and embraces paradoxes. It is a contract to be signed that requires us to view these opposing desires as forces rather than obstacles. It invites us to recognize that coexisting does not mean erasing differences but learning to walk with them, sometimes limping, sometimes agreeing, sometimes clinging. Coexisting not as a matter of course, but rather as an interface of friction, dialogue, and perpetual effort.

1. What compromises, even the most difficult ones, could you make that would allow you to live together with others ? What essential clause would you like to include to protect the relationship ?

2. Should we be completely transparent with each other ? Could we belong to the same place while each retaining some degree of opacity ?

5. After all these reflections, can you draw an imaginary, symbolic, real, or spiritual landscape that would be the perfect place to sign the pact ? Why this one ?

● ● ● ● ● What does one chimera say to another chimera ?

After signing the pact, another way of sharing emerges : one based on care, multiple intentions, and adaptability. Vector 05 is an opening : a space dedicated to those who wish to continue the discussion by adding their own questions, comments, and words. See this blank space for free expression as an invitation to complete and nurture this collaborative research.

It is a horizon to imagine in order to increase the possibilities of living and doing things together in a world of fragmented spaces.

From methods to testimonials, let's try to ensure that the sun never belongs to anyone, so that every chimera has the opportunity to meet there, always.

So, if you could make a promise to a chimera for the times to come, what would it be ?

Thank you for participating. The rest of the page is for you :)

