

AfterVille

the underground exhibition

Since the beginning of the twentieth-century science fiction has had a field day painting the appearance of the cities of tomorrow, created to host tomorrow's heroes and their adventures. Seemingly endless and different from one another, these imaginary metropolises in reality show common traits allowing to group them into ten standard models, classified according to their distinctive features. Based on the political regime, the aesthetic elements, the infrastructures, the communication means, the developmental processes, the role covered by technology, all the cities of the future described in science fiction can be grouped into one of these ten macro-categories which reflect the culture, the aesthetics and the design of a given historical period.

"AfterVille. The Underground Exhibition" is the exhibition which showcases those ten urban models, those ten imaginary capitals.

Conceived and curated by Michele Bortolami and Tommaso Del Mastro from Studio Undesign, together with Fabrizio Accatino and Massimo Teghille, AfterVille winds along an itinerary involving ten stations of the Turin Underground. All you need for visiting it is a metro ticket that you can use to move from one station to the next, thereby having the possibility of viewing all ten exhibition installations in succession. Every station is equipped with a personalized system and a display, which will show you in sequence - through a special tourist guide coming directly from 2058- all the features of these ten imaginary cities, created by mixing cinema, cartoons, and video-clips with elements of existing cities. All this in a game of mirrors capable of surprising, entertaining and bewildering the visitor.

Welcome to AfterVille, the city where tomorrow begins today. The visit to this fantastic capital, with its thousand styles, souls and faces, winds under the ground, along the route of the metro. A city created by the sum of endless science fiction imageries which dreamed it, theorized it, planned it, drawn it, shaped it from nothing.

There are endless approaches and itineraries to choose from to visit AfterVille. We have identified ten of them: ten cities into the city, one for each underground station. If you want to start the trip, all you need a little more than one hour of your time and a ticket. Take the first train and get off at the next station. Position yourself in front of a screen and visit one of the ten cities which make up AfterVille. Take another train and so on, station after station. The trip starts at TotalVille and ends at ShipVille, the last station, the last city.

Even if it is your first time at AfterVille, we are sure you will begin to recognise places, buildings, lights, atmospheres, faces within a few minutes. And once your visit has ended, you will feel as if you had lived there all along.

AfterVille

TotalVille

Decorative Absolutism

Expression of absolute power, **TotalVille** is a city designed to symbolise the figure of the emperor and his unilateral way of thinking through its aesthetics.

TotalVille is the result of a totalitarian regime where no form of individual freedom exists, where the individual is nothing but a mere tool of the central power. It is the expression of a time in which the future is imagined as being very similar to the present or recent past. A despotic future.

There is no trace of individual freedom at **TotalVille**. Only masses exist, into which everyone must merge and to which everyone must conform. **TotalVille** is the emblem of the central power. A city whose shapes and symbology embody the values for which the government assumes all the stands, where the shape of the buildings does not reflect their function, rather it is the function of architecture that is strongly influenced by the regime's rhetoric.

At **TotalVille** every aesthetic expression is marked by a rigour which is planned in advance by the despot. Repetitions and iterations are the tools used to influence minds. Views are enhanced, graphics and architecture are cut to suit exact, often central perspectives. Sceneries specifically created to benefit the empire, in which everything meets and nothing disperses. Colours are flat and solid, because shades are abolished at **TotalVille**. Everything is the result of a decision: if this is good, that is bad.

The empire is a gigantic machine whose gears, including the tiniest part, must run smoothly. And the tiniest part here means the individual, who can be replaced and sacrificed for a higher purpose. Being a product of the power, architecture too is a gigantic machine, which dominates people and becomes a symbol of both authority and authority holders.

TotalVille, however, carries the seeds of its own failure: a perfect machine which anyone, even the outcast, the poorest subject, can damage, just as Davide did with Golia. Absolute power inevitably generates an equally strong and desperate counterpower. That counterpower is the worm which will lead to system failure.

AfterVille

BetterVille

Scientific Democracy

Trusting in the future, supported by science and technology, committed to the conquest of space, **BetterVille** is the positivist and sunny city.

At **BetterVille** trust reigns: day-to-day problems are solved through science. There is no need to continue working. It is a machine that does it for us. Every family has a robot responsible for all the housework.

At **BetterVille** an unshakeable positivism reigns. Expectations for the future are immense: technological development will lead us to an ever better future. Towns are invaded by flying cars and everyone's life is projected into the future, without economic or social distinction.

At **BetterVille**, however, there is no information technology as such: machines are pure hardware, action and reaction being equal and contrary. Technology means physics, mechanics, electrics, not electronics. Miniaturization and the notion of software do not exist, so there is no trace of control units or processors. Science is linked to technique.

On a social level the scientist is definitely the most important figure, the one who will lead us towards a better future. Everyone is given the possibility of working to reach their own goals: it is the big dream of **BetterVille** projected into the city of the future. Democracy is the vision of the future. A democracy which refuses any form of centralized or hidden powers and puts an end to any existing ones.

Space is the new frontier, and everyone will be given the possibility of conquering a piece of it thanks to the new technologies. Space, resources and energies are endless.

BetterVille is the free city which has defeated dictatorship and regime. It is the ideal place to live, the representation of the absolute good. And its life model, its principles of positivism, consumerism and democracy must be exported everywhere. The world belongs to good people, and we will be saved by respectable and hypervitaminised heroes, like Superman.

Colours are bright and vivid, but most of all they are primary colours. At **BetterVille** good is absolute, showing no shade, crack or doubt. There is no limit for the individual: we will soon reach the Moon and then go even farther away. By exploiting the scientific achievements we can go beyond the old boundaries. As we now know the Earth perfectly, we can explore others worlds and take optimism and freedom everywhere.

At **BetterVille** the scenery becomes aerodynamic -with skyscrapers that seem about to take off, architecture that has lost its direct link with the territory, trains that speed along monorails and buildings that fluctuate in the air-, loses its direct contextualization and is characterised by materials and shapes new to the environment. It could be considered as a trial scenery to take to other planets, or UFOs fallen on the Earth.

AfterVille

JoyVille

Lysergic Anarchy

JoyVille is the city of the big dream, free and full of fresh thought, where ideas circulate freely and young people hold the future in their own hands.

JoyVille does not deny optimism and confidence in man, but something has changed. At **JoyVille** people can debate and protest. The future is no longer unilaterally positive.

Heroes become introspective and shades make their appearance: the world is no longer divided between the good and the wicked. The future is no longer problem-free: existential problems, personal demons and internal dramas press the citizen into action.

At **JoyVille** the central system as well as the unilateral way of thinking become open to criticism.

The phase of democratic equality cracks and personal ideals take over. Individualism and the culture of the single person lead to a principle of hedonism: everything must be pleasant to see and to touch.

JoyVille is a lysergic city: colours are mixed and matched, thereby losing their primary state and becoming acid.

Shapes change and assume a less pure, less reassuring appearance. Hybrid and biomorphous designs appear, also following the sexual revolution. There is a general move away from the invincible machine and a comeback of the individual. It is the turn of a new notion of beauty driven by the sensual shape of the body.

Young people are the new engine of **JoyVille**: a change tasting like a revolution and bringing a breath of joy. The rebellion against the established power creates a spontaneous and slightly puerile atmosphere of anarchy and freedom. The idea of respectability is fought and defeated, and the established morals are abolished. Freedom is total and involves everyone, engendering a deep feel of community.

The so called "optical" shapes attempt to visually reproduce the alienation from reality typical of drugs. At **JoyVille** people want to move away from norm in every possible way.

The generalist pop culture breaks up, thereby generating different currents. Science fiction becomes glamour and chases after the aesthetical ideals dictated by Studio 54 (or vice versa?), whose styles are literally followed by **JoyVille**. Trends are transferred by force into science fiction: in the future everything will be trendy. For the first time people look at a "design oriented" future.

AfterVille

NetVille

Digital Technocracy

The virtual city, **NetVille** was born from programming codes where space is digital and the only existing architecture is the one created by 0 and 1.

NetVille is the digital city, a borderless virtual area. It does not cover an exact space, it exists wherever there is a network. It is a dimensionless and timeless place without geometry and physical laws. At **NetVille** (almost) everything is possible: the only codes to be respected are mathematics and algorithms. Computer programming is the only existing type of creation. The creator is the programmer, who presides over the life and destiny of the inhabitants and manages the code, sometimes misusing it and losing control of it. It is the charm and the risk of the cyberpunk universe.

There are no fixed limits in the virtual city: at **NetVille** you can fly, build, fight, but everything only happens in the brain of the hacker connected to the network. Only occasionally IT illusions have repercussions on the body. Real life is only an interlude which often does not go well with the virtual world. At **NetVille** life's losers have a second chance to redeem themselves, a "second life" where to try and make up for the disappointments, failures and limits of their flesh-and-blood identity. Cyberspace is the other side of the medal of their existence. Sometimes they risk the burn-out, but it is a risk that it is worth running.

At **NetVille** shapes and colours consist of codes subject to continuous change. There are not limits to possible metamorphoses: the virtual city can be identical to the real one or completely different, full or vectorial, built on 3D shades or with monodimensional lines. **NetVille** is an unstable city, where styles and shapes mix nonstop.

Architectures are generated by the computer: previously inconceivable shapes and incalculable structures can at last be drawn and created. Unalterable surfaces become active and communicating screens. Buildings change as technology develops, the city changes according to the rules of virtual reality. CAD aesthetics influences the city: the pixel is the new measurement unit and the vector line is the structure, the frame of architecture. **NetVille** is a very articulated megalopolis, but one created by using only two elementary types of material: 0 and 1.

AfterVille

TradeVille

Aesthetic Capitalism

TradeVille is the showcase city in which everything is for sale, multinational companies are the political authorities and finance is the only engine.

TradeVille is the commercial and financial city. It grows and changes based on the monetary flow. The city skyline and structure are their direct consequences. Companies use skyscrapers as a symbol of their economic power: the higher they are, the greater is the value of the brand they represent.

At **TradeVille** mega-companies are the real holders of power. Corporate vision and politics match, and so do economic power and institutional power. Morals are manipulated by multinational companies, which bend them for the purpose of obtaining the maximum profit.

TradeVille is crowded with brands, marketing becomes aggressive and the citizen becomes its prey. "Brand placement" reigns: every object of daily life is a designer object. Everything is for sale, even human clones.

In order to be sold, everything must be shown in the window: glass is one of the recurrent material used for buildings. Taste itself changes towards a shop-window approach to aesthetical design: everything must be perfect and unblemished. The password is "novelty". **TradeVille** is the new which moves forward. Brands, with their own intrinsic characteristics, impose their forming lines to shapes and objects.

At **TradeVille** the notion of antitrust does not exist: competition is rife and some products even lose their original names, ending up being referred to with the name of their manufacturer. This is the starting point of globalisation, with corporations establishing themselves everywhere and cities ending up all looking like each other.

At **TradeVille** technology reigns unchallenged: whoever owns the most revolutionary and profitable patent wins richness and power.

Steel, glass, soaring and aerodynamic outlines sketch precise, perfect, aseptic and emotionless sceneries. Glass is the symbol of light and lightness, steel is the symbol of perfection and technology.

At **TradeVille** emotions and human contacts are put aside: interaction takes place through digital interfaces. Many of the simplest human functions pass through technology. The most used form of technology is via a screen.

AfterVille

FadeVille

Suburban Cleptocracy

FadeVille is the spread-out city, which vanishes in a single, large, repetitive and qualityless suburban area, over which the central government has lost all manner of control

At **FadeVille** the city breaks up and falls apart as the central power can no longer manage to restrain the lowest layers of the population. Total anarchy reigns: acts of violence and abuse are everyday occurrences. The citizens are at the local gangs' mercy.

Some **FadeVille** areas are no-go zones: favelas and ghettos where the law does not exist take shape. Police force and government representatives are themselves forced to compromise their own reputation by mixing with criminals. Plundering, black market, prostitution and illicit trading are everyday occurrences.

FadeVille represents a fully-fledged city involution. No traumatic event has caused such a deterioration: it is only a direct consequence of corruption and negligence.

Only the vestiges remain of the old and glorious city, scattered here and there and often left to themselves abandoned or transformed into places of the lowest rank. There is no trace of the State: the police is not doing its duty, public services are absent, infrastructures and building rules do not exist. At **FadeVille** everything has been left to its destiny.

The city expansion is continuous, repetitive and qualityless. **FadeVille** is an enormous indistinct suburban area, and such situation is destined to further degenerate since there are no funds to build quality architecture. The city resembles a big supermarket, a drugstore in which one can only buy that which is strictly necessary to make it till tomorrow, without any planning, goal or hope.

FadeVille's population feeds on its past and does not feed the future. The desire for a better future has vanished. This is the only possible present, the worse one.

Nothing is coordinated, planned, designed; on the contrary everything is random, improvised, extempore. At **FadeVille** there is no joy, as witnessed by the absence of bright colours: black, grey and dark blue reign. Everything is in decay, rotten, putrid.

AfterVille

HyperVille

Plutocracy Noir

HyperVille is the layered, hypertrophic and overpopulated city, characterised by a constant vertical expansion which supports, following the lines of the social pyramid.

HyperVille is governed by an oligarchy who live at the upper levels of the city so as not to mix themselves with the lower classes, relegated to the shadow world. At **HyperVille** the plutocracy reigns: power is in the hands of the rich, who hold it tightly. Democracy is just a far memory.

The central government has not lost its strength, but it only uses it to suit its interests. Many social layers have been abandoned to their own devices: there is a large class of down-and-outs who have been forgotten by those power and who do not want anything to do with them. The social pyramid of **HyperVille** directly reflects in the morphology of the city: the dominating classes live at the upper levels, the working classes at the bottom.

The megalopolis has layered on itself. Since there is no longer any space to expand, it has developed vertically. The built-up expanse has reached such gigantic proportions that entirely self-sufficient macro systems have been created.

Since in the layered city people use flying vehicles, there is no longer the need to use roads which have been gradually abandoned, thus becoming unhealthy and ill-famed places. The wan sun of **HyperVille** only reaches the higher buildings, the only ones facing south, so no light gets to the ground.

Everything here has become hypertrophic: huge buildings tower against the leaden sky of the city, advertising messages are continuously shown on huge displays, clients from the upper levels enrich huge fast foods.

At **HyperVille** the population has grown out of all proportion. All free spaces have been transformed into routes of communication. The inhabitants are most often forced to live into garrets and mephitic beehive-like apartment buildings. Empty space does not exist.

The atmosphere in **HyperVille** is dark and gloomy, and pollution has reached unimaginable levels.

The aesthetics of accumulation and machines rule: the city is a mechanism feeding and building itself, without any limit, in a totally self-referential developmental process. The city is the purpose of itself.

As at NetVille (but in a less utopian and more dramatic manner), at **HyperVille** the human body loses its inviolability and becomes a machine: it is the aesthetics of cyberpunk. Some parts of the body can be replaced with technological prostheses and digital connections. Androids and replicants have mixed with the rest of the society, thereby becoming an integral part of it, indistinguishable from humans.

AfterVille

iVille

Minimal Oligarchy

iVille is the monobrand, ethereal, white-dominated city: the best society citizens can desire, the only one existing.

At **iVille** nothing is out of control: the strong power makes decisions on everything, planning them from the top and basing them on the aesthetic rules of a superior entity which reflect in the city.

There is only one brand, and that single brand represents the best each citizen could dream of: everyone at **iVille** is given freedom of choice, but every choice will always end up uncritically conforming to the same line. Since there are no options, nobody can desire anything else.

The individual is lost in the brand, thereby creating a society where freedom of personal expression is not forbidden, quite simply it does not exist. Clothes and hairstyles all look alike. Men, women and robots have become indistinguishable.

Everyone at **iVille** has a specific task. Nobody is useless, but nobody can really change his or her own destiny. Individualism has disappeared, even its most typical feature - corporeity- has faded away.

iVille is an isomorph space which appears endless and metaphysic to the eye of the beholder. Its conformation is insignificant: it is not its real physical existence that is important, but our perception of it. As far as we know, it could just have been built by the imagination of its inhabitants. **iVille** does not transmit any sensorial stimulation to its inhabitants. Decontextualization is a reality: every thing can exist in any place, because it perfectly fits the brand. Everything is immaterial or dematerialized.

iVille's surface is a protective space: faint (the bright) light and dazzling white do not hide any shadow zones. Everything is known and open. At **iVille**, then, hiding is impossible.

After all, escaping the brand which only wants the welfare of its citizens would not make sense.

White is both the sum and summary of all colours (the opinions). Everyone can thus be reflected in that one and only main idea. Colours would change, thus causing the space to lose its metaphysical quality. Being a limpid colour, white is unmistakable and inviolable. It is as strong as black, but less oppressive. It leads back to a blameless certainty.

At **iVille** it is technology that adapts to man, and not vice versa. Interfaces become intuitive, object shapes become ergonomic and sensitive. Examples par excellence are robots, which become almost human, if not in terms of appearance, at least in terms of sensitivity. Interaction between man and technology becomes more direct, closer.

iVille is also the symbol of extreme minimalism: everything is rationalised, apportioned, minimal. Everything is reduced to light and shape.

AfterVille

PostVille

Atomic Tribalism

PostVille is the post-atomic apocalyptic city where civilization -wiped out by a catastrophic event- has regressed to a level of primordial life.

A traumatic event has interrupted the linear development of the city. The event is a consequence of civilization and has been caused by the unwise management of technologies: nuclear wars and cataclysms are the punishments the Earth -mistreated for centuries- inflicts. **PostVille** serves its sentence by returning to a primordial state and a tribal society.

At **PostVille** everything has started again from zero, all is up for discussion again. Life, as it was before the Big Event, will no longer come back. Progress has come to a grinding halt, all technological and social advancements are lost.

Power relations have been turned around: at **PostVille** those who control indispensable materials give orders. The city has suffered a sudden barbarization.

The remains of previous civilizations are only vestiges of a glorious faded past and have no useful role in today's society. Life has gone back to a primordial state.

At **PostVille** the aesthetics of recovery has taken over: only the function of objects, and not their shape, gets changed. Nothing is made any longer, everything is recycled. The general rule is that what is already produced is reused, without any form of progress: technology has become useless.

At **PostVille** disputes are resolved by hand-to-hand fights: it is somehow a return to prehistory. Violence for survival is used and justified.

At **PostVille** there are only villages, towns do not exist. They do not erect buildings here, but constructions. They do not create furnishing elements here, but objects intended for other purposes are used. Nature, sterile and hostile, has become an integral part of daily life.

There is no form of design, no attention is paid to the lines of the city or its elements. (The) Desert is the area that best reflects the dramatic regression of this territory. The only reason for living at **PostVille** is surviving.

AfterVille

ShipVille

Spatial Autarchy

ShipVille is the self-moving and self-managed city, limited to a precise number of inhabitants, engaged in a journey into space to ensure its survival and future.

Earth is no longer enough: it is necessary to explore new frontiers by making endless journeys, longer than a human life. The spaceship becomes a fully-fledged flying city, on board of which life passes day after day.

ShipVille is governed by a commanding officer, a representative of the military authority who -if necessary and in extreme cases- is able to enforce a proper martial repression system on board. Equipped with everything that may be necessary, **ShipVille** is completely self-sufficient. Recycled water, electricity and a sewage system for the disposal of excrements and waste are the elements flowing into its arteries. **ShipVille** embodies a model of absolute autarchy.

Spacemen living in it are not driven by the thirst for knowledge and conquest (like those of BetterVille). They are driven by the necessity to abandon the Earth, which has become inhospitable.

The atmosphere on board is claustrophobic: **ShipVille** is a city from which it is impossible to exit. As the outside environment is hostile, it follows that the city-spaceship is the only safe place available. Because of its subversive attitude towards the pre-established order, any intrusion inside it is likely to be lethal.

ShipVille is supported by, or rather built on, technology. Science is the real religion on board the city-spaceship, where an extremely advanced computer, potentially even capable of correcting human mistakes, interacts with man.

Space at **ShipVille** is optimised: in the city-spaceship each millimetre of space is carefully calculated, in a manner reminiscent of Le Corbusier's theories on the "machine à abiter". Since movements are planned in advance, during the planning phase, its inhabitants are only allowed limited freedom.

ShipVille is a real triumph of aerodynamic and technological shapes. Technology is visible, on show: externally as a symbol of strength and progress, internally as a technological adaptation of machine to man.

The asperities of the external space contrast against the ergonomics of the internal space, in a timeless fight between hospitable city and hostile environment.

Shipville's space journey has a colonial purpose: the soldiers who control the city-spaceship are looking for new planets to conquer, where to establish a new urban cycle, starting again from the beginning, that is from TotalVille.