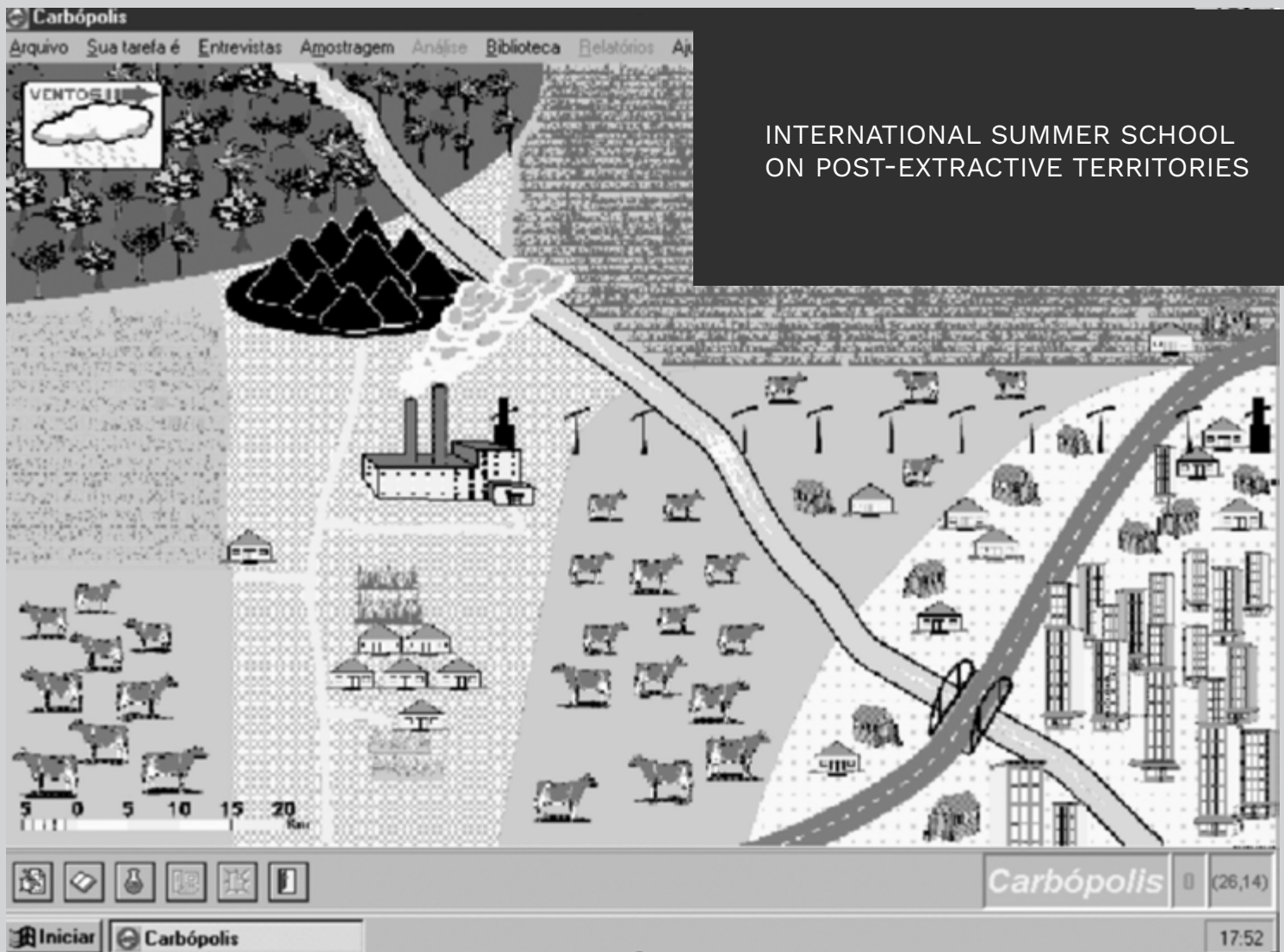


NO-CITY

FOSSILE FERTILE

CHARLEROI (BE)

5-14 SEPTEMBER 2025



INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL
ON POST-EXTRACTIVE TERRITORIES

Carbópolis — A free Java-based educational software for environmental science learning, integrating simulation, problem-solving, and interactive tools for schools.



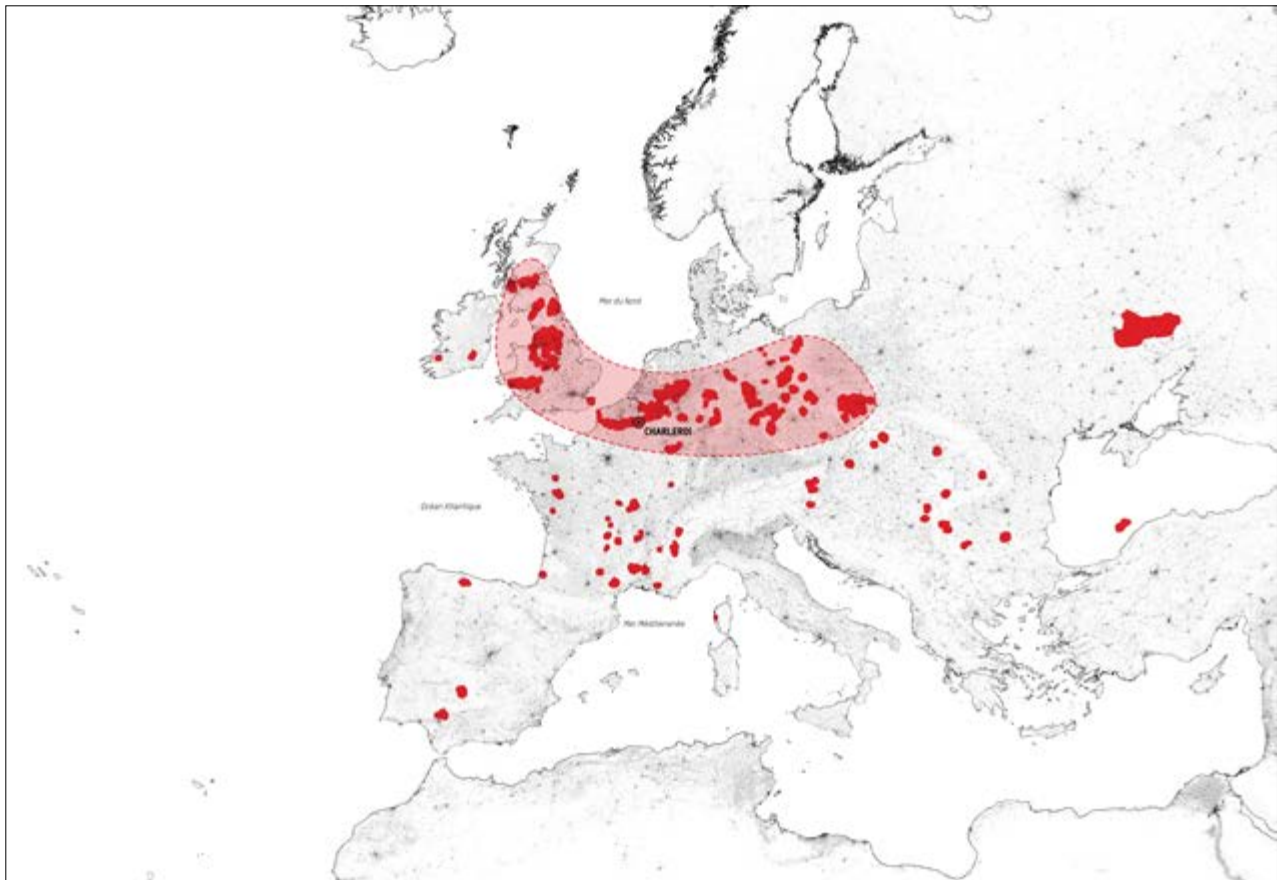
Activity spaces around water

Major operations of territorial reconfiguration are currently underway along the Sambre and the Charleroi-Brussels Canal. Photographs taken on 04/04/25 by Aurélien Delacroix (EchoEcho). Courtesy of [The Port Auto-nome de Charleroi](#).

About

The summer school will take place in the territory of Charleroi (Be) and its metropolitan area, including the lakes of l'Eau d'Heure and the eponymous river. Charleroi, long shaped by coal and steel industries, is part of the emerging territorial concept of the **Fossil Crescent**, a transnational zone structured by industrial legacy. This region, stretching from northern England through Belgium, Germany, and into Poland's Silesian basin, was shaped by the extensive extraction of coal over centuries, forming the backbone of European industrialization. It supplied a share of the energy that contributed to driving the world into what is now referred to as the **Anthropocene**, a period marked by the profound and lasting impact of human activity on the planet.

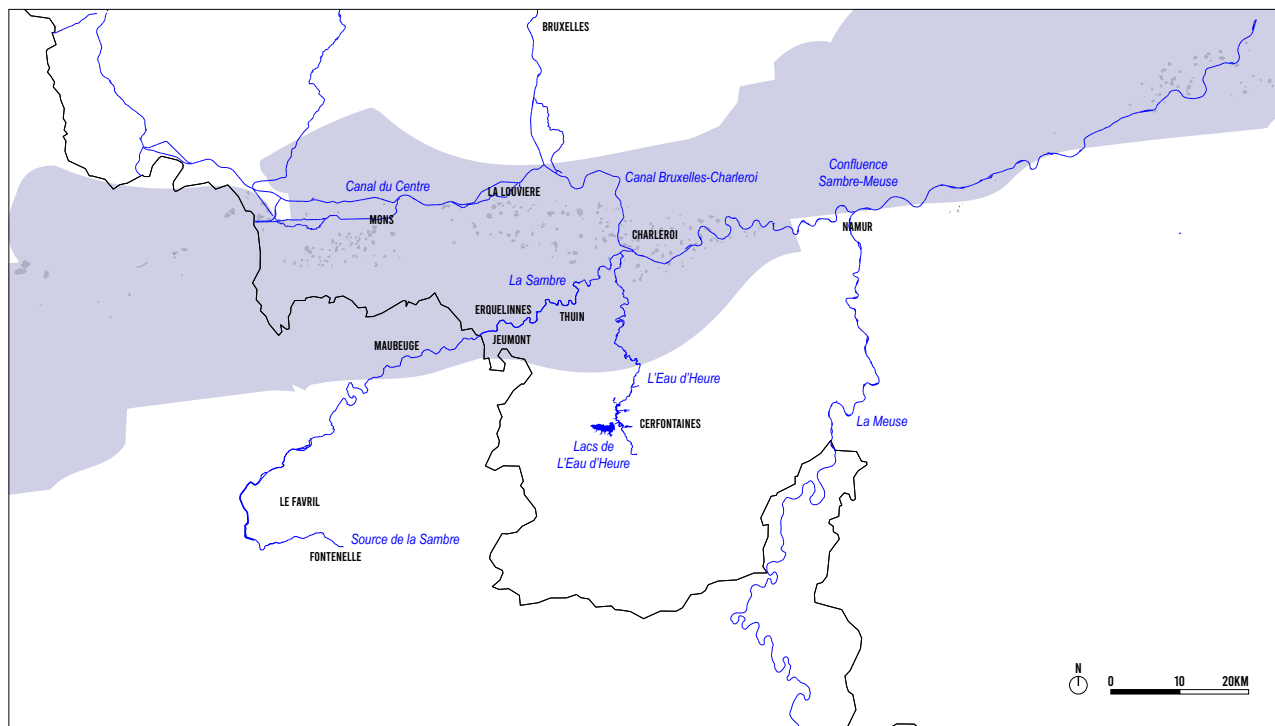
The concept of fertility will be central to this exploration. Here, fertility is not confined to its conventional meaning but refers to the capacity of a post-extractivist landscape to be reimagined, reintegrated, and transformed. What forms of fertility can emerge in the wake of industrial exploitation? What productive cycles can be reinvented in spaces marked by exhaustion? However, rather than thinking solely in terms of projection, it is also worth considering what the present already offers—what, despite the legacies of the past, retains value and potential for reconfiguration. In this context, one might also ask: what role can leisure spaces play within these altered terrains? Are they merely transitional uses, or can they contribute to unprecedented situated forms of social, ecological, or cultural regeneration?



The fossil croissant map, produced by Charleroi Bouwmeester, was published in the journal GREEN by the geopolitical group of the École de ULM. It is accompanied by an article by political scientist Paul Magnette: *Le croissant fossile aux origines de l'Anthropocène* (The Fossil Crescent: On the Origins of the Anthropocene). <https://geopolitique.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/GREEN-Croissant-fossile-FR.pdf>



Industrial plan of the Charleroi Basin, published on the occasion of the 1911 exhibition. Plan drawn and engraved by Auguste Verwest. Provided by Ghent University Library.



The Lacs de l'Eau d'Heure: A Reservoir on the Fringe of the Fossil Crescent ?

Initially created to regulate water levels in the Sambre and support river transport, the Lacs de l'Eau d'Heure maintain an indirect connection to the Fossil Crescent (represented in light blue on the map). Although located outside the coal basin, their existence is deeply linked to the management of hydraulic flows associated with the region's industrial activity.



Ateliers de Constructions
Electriques de Charleroi S.A.
8-8000 Charleroi (Belgique)

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Publication nouvelle
Sujet à modifications
sans avis préalable

La centrale d'accumulation
d'énergie par pompage
de la Plate-Taille
(Froidchapelle, Belgique)

Centrales hydro-électriques



Target Group

The summer school is open to students interested in territorial transformations, post-industrial landscapes, and alternative models of urban and rural recomposition.

Course structure

The summer school will unfold over ten days and will be structured around a series of interconnected activities. The overall framework remains open, allowing for adjustments and overlaps in response to ongoing developments. The program will include various shared moments throughout the session. A first set of activities will introduce the study framework, with contributions from key territorial actors. Exploratory fieldwork will then take place across Charleroi and its surrounding areas, focusing on a range of post-industrial and peri-urban spaces, including the Lacs de l'Eau d'Heure, the Eau d'Heure River, the Sambre, and the Charleroi–Brussels Canal. A third type of activity will consist of in-situ synthesis and production work. These will be developed collectively, in parallel with field investigations and in response to the research directions that emerge over the course of the program. A detailed schedule will be shared at a later stage. The NO-CITY perspective, adopted during the summer school, aims to explore the various layers of a territory and its urban gradients through direct engagement. Walking, considered as an aesthetic practice, will serve as a key tool to interrogate the relationship between fertility and post-extraction across different gradients of the landscape. **An online component is scheduled to take place via videoconference on 30 June.**

Academic coordination

The program is led by the Atelier de Design Urbain at the École Supérieure des Arts ARTS2 (Belgium), under the direction of the artist Sébastien Lacombez, which serves as the organising body. It was co-developed in collaboration with Marco Ranzato and Federico Brogгинi from the Department of Architecture at the Università degli Studi Roma Tre (Italy). Faculty members from the École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Versailles (France) and the Design d'Espace program at the École Nicolas Ledoux in Vincennes (France) will contribute to the pedagogical supervision of the program.

The initiative is co-organized by NO-CITY and the academic institutions within this network. Furthermore, the workshop is also part of Artifacts of Entanglement: In the Web of Extractive Urbanization, a project supported by the Proyecto de Centenario of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, under the 2024 call for proposals. This initiative also stems from a research project supported by FRArt (Fonds de la recherche en art, FNRS), which examines the role of art as a prototype for critical action within the Fossil Crescent.

ORGANISERS / TUTORS

Sébastien Lacomblez holds a master's degree in visual and spatial arts with a focus on digital practices, obtained in Mons (Be). He develops work at the intersection of art, design, and education. His artistic trajectory began in 2004 in Charleroi with the organisation of the Charbon Mazout events—techno-industrial gatherings conceived during his first year at the art school in Mons. These events sought to articulate a form of artistic intervention fully aligned with the spatial and material conditions of the surrounding post-extractive landscape. After his studies, he has developed artistic and experimental projects such as Optimum Park™, presented at Palais de Tokyo, Charleroi Danse, Wiels and B.P.S.22. In 2018, he co-directed Eurotopie, the project selected to represent Belgium at the Venice Biennale. From 2013 to 2019, he was artistic advisor to the Charleroi Bouwmeester and, in 2019, co-founded the landscape design office Carbonifère. He currently heads the Urban Design programme at ESA ARTS² in Mons. Together with landscape architect Claire Daoudi and art historian Sébastien Biset, he conducts research on the Francophone transnational segment of the “Fossil Crescent,” a bioregion stretching from northern England to Silesia, shaped by coal extraction and historically associated with the onset of the Anthropocene. Focusing on Wallonia and Northern France, the study examines post-industrial transitions and the role of aesthetics in these transformations. Drawing on the thought of Bernard Stiegler, it explores how industrialisation reconfigured the relationship between art and technique, contributing to the loss of individual creative capacities. The research supports the development of regionally rooted pedagogies and associative practices, advocating for alternatives to conventional institutional formats such as the exhibition model, in response to the socio-environmental specificities of these territories.

Marco Ranzato is an architect and researcher, currently Associate Professor at Roma Tre University. Trained in architecture and environmental engineering, his work explores the intersections of urban design, socio-technical infrastructures, and critical approaches to ecology. His research focuses on urban metabolisms, with particular attention to water flows, as well as co-design and co-production processes in public services. He has taught and conducted research at TU Delft, Tongji University (Shanghai), and The New School (New York). In Brussels, he is affiliated with the LoUIsE research group and has coordinated several projects within Metrolab, notably in the context of ERDF funding, examining the capacity of urban projects to align with metropolitan strategies of transformation.

Federico Brogini is an architect and researcher in urban studies with Phd in landscape architecture from Roma Tre University. He is currently part of a research group in urban studies at University of Florence. He is member of Latitude Platform, a collective that brings together researchers and practitioners who investigate contemporary urban spaces and spatial dynamics as the outcome of multiscalar relationships and interdependencies between human and non-human actors. The interdisciplinarity and plurality of perspectives are a founding component of Latitude Platform: starting with the knowledge of urban research and design, the projects punctually envisage the participation and contribution of the knowledge of anthropologists, sociologists, ecologists, pho-

tographers and artists, among others. Located between Brussels, Venice and Rome, the platform operates through numerous collaborations with universities, non-governmental organisations, local associations and committees as well as public institutions.

TUTORS

Susanne Stacher is a professor and researcher, critic and architect. After starting her career in the offices of Renzo Piano, Dominique Perrault and Shigeru Ban, she shifted her focus to research and teaching. At the School of Architecture in Versailles (ENSA V), she teaches theory and design and directs the PhD seminar Transition by Experimentation. Her research lies at the interface of architecture and urbanism, theory and philosophy. Birkhäuser published her PhD *Sublime Visions: Architecture in the Alps* (English, German, French, 2018) and her most recent research *In Times of Crisis. Current and Historical Strategies for Designing 'New Worlds'* (German, French, 2023), focused on narratives that outline a different relationship to the world. She co-organized the international conference *Off-site Construction in the Face of the Anthropocene* (Maison de l'architecture Paris, 2023, published in 2024) and organized the international conference *A Question of Time. In Search of Temporal Strategies for an Architecture of Transition* (Cité de l'architecture Paris, 2024).

Luciano Aletta is an architect and adjunct professor at the School of Architecture of Versailles (Ensa-V). He graduated with honours at the First School of Architecture "Ludovico Quaroni" of Roma La Sapienza, and he holds a post-graduate degree in housing from the University of Roma Tre. He studied at the Lusíada University of Lisbon, and he is a PhD candidate at the CY Cergy Paris Université. His research questions the contemporary regime of private and public property of land, exploring possible alternatives grounded on the principles and the practices of the common. He collaborated with the architecture and engineering firm Yasui Architects and Engineers (Tokyo), and the offices of architecture 2A+P/A (Rome) and Dogma (Brussels). He is a partner of the architectural network ARTIFICIALE and a founding member of the international architecture collective CONCRETE (CNCRT). With CONCRETE he participated at the First Biennale of Architecture and Landscape of the Île-de-France (2019), the exhibition *The institution of the Common* at the Galerie Blanche of the Unité d'Habitation of Briey (2022), and the festival *Oltre: Laboratorio Nomade per lo Studio dei Territori Irpini* (2023). The work of CNCRT has been published in the book *Collective Processes. Counterpractices in European Architecture* edited by Natalie Donat-Cattin.

Several guest lecturers and experts will contribute, including:

Paul Magnette is a professor of political science at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB), where his research focuses on democratic theory and European integration. Alongside his academic career, he has held several political positions at the regional and federal levels. He served as Mayor of Charleroi from 2012 to 2024, was Belgium's Federal Minister for Climate and Energy, and later became Minister-President of the Walloon Government. He currently serves as President of the Socialist Party (Parti socialiste). He is also the author of the concept of the Fossil Crescent, which frames post-industrial territories as sites of transition, shaped by the legacy of ex-

tractive economies and contemporary socio-environmental challenges.

Benoît Moritz, architect (ISACF-La Cambre) and urban planner (UPC Barcelone), co-founder of MSA, a Brussels-based architecture and urbanism agency engaged in multi-scale urban projects. He also coordinates Metrolab.Brussels, a transdisciplinary urban research lab, and serves as an academic coordinator for the Master in Territorial Management and Urban Development co-organized in Charleroi by ULB and UMONS. He is a member of the scientific board of the Brussels Studies Institute.

Paolo Ruaro is an architect graduated from IUAV in Venice and La Cambre Horta, where he obtained a degree in urban planning. His various collaborations abroad and in Belgium have involved him in city construction at different scales. While continuing his architectural practice, including multidisciplinary collaborations, he has pursued his interest in geographic information management as a tool for territorial analysis. He is also a member of the Bouwmeester team in Charleroi, an advisory body that guides the city's urban and architectural development by promoting quality design, sustainability, and strategic planning in public projects.

Claire Daoudi is a landscape designer and researcher, currently working with artist Sébastien Lacomblez and art historian Sébastien Biset on a project exploring the arts as prototypes for critical actions within the Fossil Crescent. A top graduate of the École Nationale Supérieure de Paysage de Versailles (ENSPV) in 2022, she combines theoretical and hands-on landscape design, shaped by three years of apprenticeship under Jean-Marc L'Anton.

Denis Cariat was part of the Delivery Unit of CATCH (Catalyst for Charleroi), an initiative set up following the closure of the Caterpillar site to accelerate projects with job-creation potential in the Charleroi region. As a member of this team, he contributed to the strategic redefinition of A6K, a technological and industrial hub that aims to strengthen the local and regional economy. In parallel, he obtained a master's degree in geographical sciences, specializing in Global Change, with an advanced research focus, at the University of Liège. His thesis, entitled Charleroi Métropole Facing Climate Change: Modeling Climate Changes in a Micro-Territory Using the MAR Model, analyzes the impacts of climate change on the Charleroi region.

Inscription

To apply, please submit a single-page document (max. 300 words) including:

- A short presentation of your profile ;
- Your areas of interest and how they relate to the workshop ;
- Relevant skills or experience ;
- Optionally, an image illustrating a past project or reference work

Applications should be sent to sebastien.lacomblez@gmail.com by 7 May 2025.