

Die Gesellschaft  der Stadtwanderer

SAZ L-S

SPECULATIVE AUTONOMOUS ZONE LIFE-SIZE

1 "Lore" (coming from "folklore") is a term to refer to a diegesis (narrative mechanisms) that presents the history and traditions surrounding a fictional universe.

2 "Post-industrial exploration" invites participants to utilize the graphic and typographic elements of urban signage to design two speculative visual and textual narratives combining a series of posters with a palimpsestic display program inspired by the Völklinger Hütte industrial site, which serves as a material allegory of a post-fossil-fuel world. This workshop involves forty ENSAS students supervised by urban artist Arzhel Prioul and lecturer-researcher Mathieu Tremblin in partnership with the Völklinger Hütte UNESCO World Heritage Site. The group's work will be presented during the Urban Art Biennale in 2024 and 2026.

3 Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer is an artistic initiative conceived in 2024 by Mathieu Tremblin to enable artists and enthusiasts of urban exploration, urbanity, and urban art to collaborate and narrate the micro-history of territories through urban interventions.

4 "Escape from the Green Belt" takes over an abandoned auto scrapyard used as a resource center for the development of post-industrial speculative rituals. This workshop involves thirty ENSAS students mentored by Czech artist and documentary filmmaker Vladimír Turner and faculty members Jeremy Hawkins and Mathieu Tremblin, in partnership with the Völklinger Hütte UNESCO World Heritage Site. The group's work is presented during the 2026 Urban Art Biennale.

5 The first iteration of the "ZAS (Speculative Autonomous Zone)" takes place in 2024 at the Syndicat Potentiel with a group of ENSAS students focused on the Neudorf neighborhood, led by artist-researchers Sophie Prinssen and Léo Saliez; the second took place in February–March 2026 during the Ososphère with researchers and residents of Strasbourg, resulting in a series of life-size textual interventions in the Gare Centre (GCG) neighborhood.

Speculative Autonomous Zone Life-Size (SAZ L-S) is an artistic project initiated by Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer that unfolds in the lead-up to and during the Urban Art Biennale through a role-playing game and a series of site-specific interventions at the Völklinger Hütte. Its aim is to initiate a conversation with the future regarding the livability of the city of Völklingen and the future of the UNESCO World Heritage site—in light of the city's industrial past, the present state of its heritage-listed industrial legacy, and the promise of a future in which the city would host the production of "green steel." Artists and researchers are invited to conceive, and then experiment with residents and visitors, a speculative and situated lore¹, made tangible through cartography and narrative materialized within the grounds of the Völklinger Hütte. The emerging itinerary also incorporates contextual works conceived from this futuristic vision by two visual artists who engage with the fictional space and help make it both tangible and credible.

Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer is an informal group of urban explorers founded on the occasion of the 2024 Urban Art Biennale at Völklinger Hütte (DE). In 2026 in Völklingen, it brings together artist-researchers Léo Saliez, Sophie Prinssen, Mathieu Tremblin, Alice Jeannel, Jeremy Allan Hawkins, Valentin Ossenbrüner, and Roland Görgen, and visual artist Anna Weberberger.

Frame

Between 2024 and 2025, the urban space of Völklingen in Strasbourg served as a crucible for a fictional narrative developed through several artistic intervention programs:

- "Post-Industrial Exploration²," a speculative poster workshop centered on the Völklinger Hütte industrial site;
- "Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer³" a series of creative residencies in the urban space of Völklingen;
- "Escape from the Green Belt⁴" a video-performance workshop on the connections between community and post-industrial landscape linking the Green Belt areas in Strasbourg and the Völklinger Hütte industrial site.

In April, the Urban Art Biennial once again welcomes Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer for a sensible and speculative diagnosis of Völklinger Hütte. With the support of a Speculative Autonomous Zone (ZAS) role-playing system tested in 2024 and 2026⁵, the physical survey of the territory shifts toward the realm of storytelling. The members of Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer adopt the agentive and prospective conversational form of role-playing to engage with researchers, visitors to the Völklinger Hütte, and residents of Völklingen in a survey of their memories and imaginations as they relate to the social history of the industrial site and its surroundings.

The life-size understanding of role-playing can be linked to “live-action role-playing” (LARP) referring to a gameplay principle in which players physically embody fictional characters and interact within a given space that serves as the physical setting for the game. Here, the shared experience during the SAZ game phase is transposed to the scale of the industrial site. At the end of the game, the collectively produced speculative narrative is spatialized within the enclosure: a series of textual interventions attaches narrative fragments to specific spaces. This narrative also serves as a foundation for a series of contextual interventions by invited visual artists. These interventions are commented on and articulated to outline a speculative route to be experienced through a map displayed in the Urban Art Biennale exhibition.



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. SAZ L-S Völklinger Hütte. 2026.
Stencil, charcoal on wall. 116 x 18 cm. Inscription: Mathieu Tremblin.

Production

The SAZ L-S art project is produced by Völklinger Hütte with support from the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Strasbourg (ENSAS).

Survey and narrative by Alice Jeannel, Jeremy Allan Hawkins, Roland Görgen, Valentin Ossenbrüner, Sophie Prinssen, Léo Sallez, and Mathieu Tremblin. Map by Léo Sallez. Game design by Sophie Prinssen and Léo Sallez. Graphic design by Mathieu Tremblin. Writing by Sophie Prinssen, Léo Sallez, Mathieu Tremblin, and Alice Jeannel. Translation by Daniel Bauer and Jeremy Allan Hawkins. Texts by Sophie Prinssen and Mathieu Tremblin. Playtest by Liliana Amundaraín, Ileana Faur, Roland Görgen and Thomas Lasbouygues. Textual interventions by Alice Jeannel and Mathieu Tremblin. Contextual intervention by Anna Weberberger. Audiotour by Ileana Faur, Jeremy Allan Hawkins and Léo Sallez. Special thanks to Frank Krämer and the Urban Art Biennale team, as well as Kelly Molon (ENSAS).

Schedule

The SAZ L-S project unfolds in several phases:

1. Surveying and developing the game system

22.03.2026 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., Völklinger Hütte, Völklingen (DE)

Members of Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer gather for a phase of speculative mapping of the Völklinger Hütte and its surroundings.

2. Surveying and writing the localized lore

02.04.2026 9:00 a.m.–8:30 p.m., Völklinger Hütte, Völklingen (DE)

Members of Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer gather for a writing phase involving research (surveying the territory and conversations with local figures) and the design of a game system tailored to Völklinger Hütte (writing a specific lore developed from existing elements). This location-specific lore is shared with three invited urban artists and serves as a foundation for the development of their works.

3. Playtest

25.04.2026, 2:00–6:30 p.m., Völklinger Hütte, Völklingen (DE)

Members of Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer bring together players and researchers for a playtest to experiment with and develop the lore. This gameplay phase serves as a basis for developing a speculative narrative about the future of Völklinger Hütte, dialoguing with the cartography presented during the Urban Art Biennale.

4. Intervention, Cartography, and the Inscription of Situated Lore

29.04–07.05.2026, Völklinger Hütte, Völklingen (DE)

One visual artist creates a site-specific intervention at the Völklinger Hütte site, while fragments of the speculative narrative are selected and spatialized in the form of textual interventions. Together, these elements trace a route through the industrial site, transcribed into a take-home map distributed during the Urban Art Biennale. In this way, the speculative narrative guides visitors as they explore the site, framing the interventions as speculative traces of a conversation with the territory's future.

5. Public Game Session

10.05.2026, 2:00–6:30 p.m., Völklinger Hütte, Völklingen (DE)

Members of Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer guide participants and visitors through an exploration of the game system and an appropriation of the existing lore to shape their own narratives.



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. Writers' Room Team: Mathieu Tremblin, Léo Sallez, Sophie Prinssen, Alice Jeannel. 2026. Völklingen (DE).



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. Writers' Room Team: Valentin Ossenbrüner, Jeremy Allan Hawkins, Roland Görgen. 2026. Völklingen (DE).

Team

Mathieu Tremblin (b. 1980) is a French artist, curator, researcher at the Architecture, Urban Morphogenesis, and Project Laboratory (AMUP, EA 7309 ENSAS/INSA Strasbourg), and associate professor of fine and visual arts at the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Strasbourg (ENSAS).

He lives in Strasbourg and works in Europe and beyond. Tremblin's artistic practice is linked to the use and wear of urban space: documentation, action, and storytelling make the public dimension of the city legible and tangible, while encouraging its appropriation. He tracks and examines the attitudes and traces left by city dwellers as subtle signals of their urbanity, aiming to write their microhistory in order to weave together an understanding of urban phenomena on other scales. The process of defining and symbolizing these urbanities activates an imaginary where the commons created on the urban margins are brought back to the center of attention. This approach takes the form of a series of urban interventions, editorial experiments, exhibition curation, and residency programs. His research focuses on mechanisms for documenting and narrating urban intervention practices, sensible diagnostic approaches, the interplay between analog and digital in the fields of publishing and urban studies, protocols and processes of collaboration and co-creation, and the connections between creativity, microhistory, and social struggles.

— Website: www.mathieutremblin.com

Léo Sallez (b. 1993) pursued a dual degree, moving from the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Reims (CRR) to the École Supérieure d'Art et de Design de Reims (ESAD).

His artistic approach is contextual. He moves according to the rhythm of invitations and residencies. His journeys consist of telling the stories of the territories he traverses, from the forests of Alsace to the Normandy coast via the landscapes of Lorraine; each region is explored for what it holds: the alliance of a culture and an ecosystem. In 2023, after three years of wandering, the artist settled in Strasbourg and became involved with the artist-run space, Syndicat Potentiel. He dedicates himself to alternative cartography and sound art while developing methods of participatory practice and collaboration.

"Just like clay, rock, or iron, words and testimonies constitute a material in their own right, and what some might describe as mere distant and fragile whispers, for Léo Sallez there is no doubt: it is the very stuff of reality." (Timothée Pugeault)

— Website: <https://www.instagram.com/leo.sallez>

Sophie Prinssen (b. 1995) is an artist, researcher, and arts professional. She is currently a joint PhD candidate at the FabLitt laboratory (Paris 8) and Meaningful Play (KUL).

Her dissertation, titled Teaching the Real, explores the intersections between tabletop role-playing, co-creative practices, and critical pedagogies. In addition to her research and creative work, she works independently as an artistic project coordinator, applying her coordination skills to support artistic creation. Sophie Prinssen is a member of the artistic council of Syndicat Potentiel, an artist-run space based in Strasbourg. She co-coordinates Activismes ésotériques with artist-in-residence Cynthia Montier, a research and co-creation collective at the intersection of ritual, performance, and intervention in public space. Sophie Prinssen has served as an exhibition coordinator, production assistant, and project manager at various art institutions, including CEAAC, Syndicat Potentiel, the Villa Vassillief Pernod-Ricard Fellowship, and Bétonsalon, a center for art and research.

— Website: <https://eur-artec.fr/projets/enseigner-le-reel-sophie-prinssen/>

Alice Jeannel (b. 2000) is an artist who holds a master's degree in Terrain from the École supérieure d'art Annecy Alpes (ESAAA) and is currently pursuing a master's degree in geography (Geopoesice) at the Université Grenoble Alpes in Grenoble.

She is a member of the Fragments collective, with which she is developing Galerie Sandwich (a traveling gallery carried by a "sandwich man or woman"). In 2026, she will assist Mathieu Tremblin as an artist's assistant following the LIPra 2025 inter-institutional seminar (Reading, Printing, Performing Artistic Research) at Syndicat Potentiel in Strasbourg.

— Website: <https://www.collectif-fragments.fr>



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. SAZ L-S Survey. 2026. Völklinger Hütte (DE).



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. SAZ L-S Survey. 2026. Völklinger Hütte (DE).

Writers' Room

Jeremy Allan Hawkins is a Franco-American poet living in Strasbourg (FR), associate professor in ENSAS, member of AMUP laboratory (EA 7309).

He holds a doctorate of fine arts and is author of the prize-winning collection *A Clean Edge* (BOAAT, 2017), as well as *enditem* (Downingfield, 2024) and *Fantastic Premise* (Alien Buddha, 2023). His writing has been selected for the Best New Poets anthology series and the extended programme of the Venice Architecture Biennial. He is a lecturer at the Strasbourg National School of Architecture (ENSAS) and was named an emerging researcher in 2022 as part of SFC Saltire Scheme for his work on poetics and spatial practice.

Roland Görden is a French visual artist, living and working in Strasbourg (FR).

His artistic practice lies at the intersection of photography, sculpture, and publishing, and is rooted in a reflection on material culture and the memory of objects. Drawing on his background in ethnology, he develops an approach in which photography adapts to the defined body of work: at times studio work revealing the materiality of found objects, at other times documentary "notes" capturing traces of the urban space. His creative process is based on a back-and-forth between collecting, the archaeology of the everyday, and reassembly. He repurposes used materials to strip them of their utilitarian function and expose their pure presence. This approach also fuels projects stemming from residencies that explore the historical layers contained within institutional collections. Beyond exhibitions, he engages with the publishing field through the design of books and journals often distributed under open licenses. Finally, he conducts a long-term documentary project on the transformation of intimate landscapes, orchestrating a continuous collection of traces and artifacts. His work questions our relationship to time, use, and disappearance.

Valentin Ossenbrüner is a German visual artist and farmer who lives and works in Strasbourg (FR) outskirts.

His erratic, spontaneous artistic approach draws inspiration from the daily life of someone who lives and seeks his place in a contradictory and ever-changing world. In 2000, he co-founded the *Lundi Matin* collective with † Francis Guerrero. This collective organizes a weekly artistic exchange in an interstitial urban space, thereby putting artistic reflection to the test of public experience. The opportunity to establish an educational garden in 2006–2007 led him toward agriculture. He completed his training with an agricultural degree, worked on a biodynamic farm, and teaches urban agriculture (agritecture) in various contexts. The "LaFerme!" project began in 2011 and continues today. It involves small-scale subsistence farming that creates new landscapes. It renews certain working practices and foreshadows the possibility of a more harmonious relationship between the city and its surroundings.



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. SAZ L-S Writers' room. 2026. The Blast Furnace Office, Völklinger Hütte (DE).

Playtest

Liliana Amundaraín (b. 1989) is a Venezuelan architect, art critic, and social entrepreneur based in Strasbourg and working between Latin America and Europe.

She creates critical and inclusive environments for architecture studios, contemporary art, and innovative organisations. Her work consists of building connections among multidisciplinary stakeholders at ecosystem level to grow businesses with international impact. She holds an M.A. in Art criticism from the University of Strasbourg (2019) and an architecture degree from Simón Bolívar University (2014).

Thomas Lasbouygues is a French visual artist, living and working in Strasbourg (FR).

By using play as a means of staging, Thomas Lasbouygues offers contextual interventions, activated by the construction of fictional characters that bring an illusionistic apparatus to life. The audience journeys to the heart of his universe, immersed in flows of information that they can judge as true or false, tragic or naive, idiotic or poetic, exotic or powerfully rooted in the everyday lives we encounter.

Ileana Faur (b. 1985) is a Romanian visual artist, living and working in France.

She explores the links between everyday materiality and collective memory through textiles, embroidery, photography, and installation. Her work draws on domestic gestures passed down by women, transformed into slow rituals where each stitch becomes a space for connection and storytelling. Her works function as sensitive archives, open to new narratives and possible futures.



Die Gesellschaft der Stadtwanderer. SAZ L-S Playtesters. 2026. Völklinger Hütte (DE).

Interpretation of the lore



Anna Weberberger. *Erd&*. 2023.
Lungitz Station, Katsdorf (AU).
Field wheat, a window overlooking a
concentration camp, a planter found in a
warehouse.

Anna Weberberger (b. 1995 – AU) transforms her environment into raw material and, through participant observation, modifies societal algorithms. Through an interdisciplinary approach, I transform spaces into settings conducive to playful reflection, interaction, consumption, and critique. In doing so, I spatialize questions of co-creation and care within a standardized world, for example by reversing the function of everyday objects. Mindful, I wander through the city, stopping at every opportunity, and I conceive of daily life as my studio. I am interested in the lived creativity and simultaneous passivity of my fellow human beings, as well as the visual and sculptural forms of expression that accompany them. By intervening in space—by removing, adding, moving, and imitating—I reinterpret what already exists. Within the framework of a relational aesthetic, I conceive of my work as an invitation to engage with the man-made environment.

— Website: <https://annaweberberger.com>



**The playkit
of the role-playing
game SAZ L-S 2046
Völklinger Hütte
is available online**



[https://www.bluefolders.org/ftp/
zasgn-2026/SAZLS_2026_VOELKLINGEN_
PLAYKIT.zip](https://www.bluefolders.org/ftp/zasgn-2026/SAZLS_2026_VOELKLINGEN_PLAYKIT.zip)

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and explore
the SAZ L-S 2046
Völklinger Hütte**



[https://www.bluefolders.org/ftp/
zasgn-2026/SAZLS_2026_VOELKLINGEN_
AUDIOTOUR.mp3](https://www.bluefolders.org/ftp/zasgn-2026/SAZLS_2026_VOELKLINGEN_AUDIOTOUR.mp3)

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the form to
participate in
the next SAZ L-S
role-playing session
at Völklinger Hütte**



<https://framaforms.org/role-playing-game-saz-l-s-speculative-autonomous-zone-life-size-1774609193>