DREAM OF A CITY.

DESIGNED BY EMMA SAUNDERS

What ??? and me!
I'm there too!
It's not all about you
my dear! What about the people who prepare your food, clean your rooms or just do all the invisible work. A little stronger for them there.
Let us see... flap flap
humph... no, not here...

Scratch scratch

Hai! ha ha!
There we go!

Sorry, to be stuck in a thorny but I just came across the lines I want to share with you... so today we are going to talk about the evolution of the city as an entity. Many myths exist about how the first city appeared and its creation always seems linked to an overarching communal project. Though this shared space soon evolved to be oppressive... they express that discontent we have, such as Tolstoy: 

"The first human being was conscious that, beside the godly spiritual force which governed his soul, there existed a divine power which would not grant him the humble peace he desired."

It is in direct opposition to his inborn mood, dominated his life and dominated fulfillment of its decrees. This was the growing of anxiety in his soul, shattering his peace and depriving its achievements of value.

This argument that Freud later on tries to trace, I believe is deeply rooted in our place and role in the city, how we live together and how we see this union is essential to how we feel about society, for me, this symbology society at the highest point of achievement since they are the signs that the cohesive power of society is maximum.

So, I'm going to show you some text to start thinking of the city. If I could only find them...
So first lets do a brief history of human's collective life.

At the beginning we had little communities, centered around a market place or a resource with relative independence but little opportunities.

Then the need to protect oneself against the other communities was given the technological means to be fulfilled. Walls were build enclosing more fluid identities. However the central community space still remained.

And there came the city, the megalopolis, juxtaposition of different individual bubbles [car, work, house], next to each others but never interacting. Everyone tries to push the other out to get more space for themselves. However fantasy and imagination still had a place in this chaotic scramble in this modern jungle.

Everyone tries to differentiate themselves and mark the city.

But this brought hunger for land, and each one of us wanted our own house, our own private space over which we can finally have some authority. And provokes us the "pleasure of control" to make us forget our frustration. But this Idolatry for land brought to an end all community organization and the neighbour became the final enemy.

Some people call this progress. I just refer to it as evolution... Anyways lets look at some traditional myths about the city, its creation and the origin of our unhappiness with it.
Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved about, they built a plain in Babel out of bricks and bitumen. They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar.

Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so that they will not understand each other’s speech.” So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

At first all the arrangements for building the tower of Babel were characterized by fairly good order. Indeed, the order was perhaps too perfect, too much thought was taken for guides, interpreters, accommodation for the workmen and needs of communication as if it were centuries before one had to do the work in.

In fact, the general opinion at that time was that one simply could not build to such a very little insistence on what would serve at all to be argued in this way: the essential thing in the whole business is the idea of building a tower that will reach heaven. In comparison with that idea, everything else is secondary.

The idea, once sized in its magnificence, can never vanish again so long as there are men on the earth. There will be also the irresistible desire to complete the building. That being so, however one need have no anxiety about the future; on the contrary, human knowledge is increasing, the art of building has made progress and will make further progress, a piece of work which takes us a year may perhaps be done in half the time in another hundred years, and better done, too, more excellently.

So why exert oneself to the extreme limit of one’s present power? There would be some sense in doing that only if it were likely that the tower could be completed in one generation, and it is beyond all hope. It is far more likely that the next generation with their perfected knowledge will find the work of their predecessors hard and rear down what has been built as to begin a new.

Such thoughts paralyzed people’s powers, and so they really less about the tower than the construction of a city for the workmen. Every nationally wanted the finest quarters for itself, and this gave rise to disputes, which developed into bloody conflicts. These conflicts never came to an end; to the leaders they were a new proof that, in the absence of the necessary unity, the building of the tower must be done very slowly, or indeed preferably postponed until universal peace was declared.

But the time was spent not only in conflict. The town was embellished in the detailers and they unfortunately enough, instead of fresh leaves and fresh flowers, in this fashion the age of the first generation went past; but none of the succeeding ones showed any different except that technical skills increased and with it occasion for conflict. To this must be added that the second or third generation had already recognized the senselessness of building a heaven-reaching tower; but by that time everybody was too deeply involved to leave the city. All the Sagrado and boys that came to birth in the city are filled with longing for a prophesied day when the city would be destroyed by five furious blows from a gigantic fist...
Fascinating, no?

One interesting point is this view of the city as a dream, a common project based on infinite possibilities and total freedom of imagination. But this defining project which gives an identity, a "name" is pervaded or by God or by the human's own defaults. Here we can see two tendencies: in the Bible, God is jealous and fears the humans because He has recognized the strength and power such a human organization holds. Indeed they understand each other and listen to each other's propositions holding therefore a tremendous power and leaving infinite potential only bounded by the Symbolic Limit of the sky. In the Bible, God is responsible for our history, our division, and our unhappiness. Kafka on the contrary requires responsibilities to humans; we, our laziness, envy, aggressiveness, procrastination keep us from fulfilling our dream.

The city here embodies the duality Freud recognized in human: the creation, unifying, and constructive instinct he calls Eros and its opponent or partner, dividing, destroying, the death instinct. Indeed the city is both the open door to infinite possibilities, playground of the imagination and orgasm of communal life and achievement while also being the birthplace of our problems: the laws and the administrative institutions.

With the city as a symbol for civilization we can see our ambivalence towards culture, Kafka illustrates well the tension between our dream that seems so close we could almost touch them and swallow them and our dissatisfaction and resentfulness which prevent us from reaching our goal.

However the main idea is that whether God’s or our own fault, we are left together in the city not by choice anymore but by habit.

Furthermore the institutions and decisive elements that were created as temporary and flexible tools to maintain unity are kept without the previous unity and comprehension. But the workers in the tower still continue to show up every day and receive their salaries once the language has been diverted. The only mean of communication left is money which is based on common agreements and tradition and therefore allows basic exchanges and primary interaction. Now work resumes itself to the accumulation of money.

The money which previously was only a means becomes an end. This leads to the glorification of the authority since it now concentrates the money, and the means to produce it. Its power which before was only for practical reason becomes legitimized because it is the source of the unique communicating system: money. Now competition thrives and more rules are needed to contain it.

The infinite spiral towards evergrowing repression is started and no solution seems possible.
Your safe, judging position doesn't have to ask you to fight. No just to speak. Why do you always have the authority figure? Why can't you trust me? Why don't you listen?
... Why are you silent? Are you ignoring me now?
... And really, I'm not mad at you at all, I appreciate your efforts. No, I am mad at myself and at my hopelessness. But I just can't see a way out...

It is nice to have all these solutions, theories in a pretty little book but how can I suppose to feel better in this society which ignores me? And what can I change when I have everything that crushes me all the daily duties rushing on me and keeping me so busy. And you make fun of my religion but what if I need the hope...? Because your consciousness is painful, it is hard work, and it is... It...

Gniark

Hnn... Let's see... Sigh
Why can't we do the same? What would it mean for us?

If you can dream — and not make your dreams your master;

If you can hear the truth you've spoken,

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,

And stop and
twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,

If you can fill
with 60 seconds worth of distance
Yours is the Earth and
And -- which is more -- you'll be a man, my son!

Can the project of a city survive? Can the bricks of the tower closing us in a spiral of oppression and darkness be transparent or vibrate under the rhythm of our dream?

How can we reclaim the city?
We would live the city as a sharing place, live in the city, outside in the street, on the benches to be able to see the other instead of safely ignoring him or her, hiding in our cars, houses, workplaces...

The city would be somewhere colorful, inviting pleasure and play, putting you in a good mood, smacking an involuntary smile on your face.

The city would be somewhere where you wouldn't be afraid to walk outside. Somewhere you trusted your neighbors, where you wouldn't need guns, dogs or Burton allied guards. Somewhere where you would feel comfortable strolling around.

The city would be somewhere impregnated by your presence. Somewhere where you can leave an impact. You can mark the city...

And marks, specialties, uniqueness that would make us inhabitant proud of their city. They would choose to live instead of surrendering to habit. Those land marks give an identity, a character, a taste instead of blend and mild uniformity.
A city you make home.

a city where you have no limits; only possibilities.

city where you can play.

You would have a voice in the city. You would have a role in the city.

You can dream in your city. Open space to the imagination. Share some empty spaces also to be filled with your wishes and aspirations.

But grow the weeds of imagination.

a city with community space: to interact and discover with others.
what about you? What would you chose for a city?

Hmm.

I hate when you get so boring.

Hopeful? Enthusiastic?

Who cares?

Peace and love 🌍

(me, a hippy? 🙄😂)

Hmmm, which it?

It? Can't you feel it? Can't you hear it? Our connections in and with the world; links that assure us that 'we can never can't you feel its pulsation when you are proud of your accomplishments as a group, when you are in front of a great drawing, you'd like water, when you hear a children laugh...? When you smile in the street, when you care but also more personally when in a hot bath the burning water penetrates your pores, making your nerves shiver and relieve the tension at last in one breath, the deep expiration when you lean on the couple but firm, steady shun of your lover or friend... In a general burst of laugh, in a uncontrollable cheerfulness... Some call it erotic, and find it in the deepest sensual meaning of life, some find it through religion and community spirit, moral values and certainty provided, some find it in the sense of a global community, under the flag of humanity and universal rights... However approached, it is about consciousness and respect. Receptivity. Understanding or at least listening. I feel it is the capability to see all the offers even those that aren't proposed and then make a choice. Desire for the other. Apparate for life, love and sharing. If you can, if you try, they will too...
Hi there. So how was your trip?

hmm. nice. I slept. I had a dream. Ask what about?

Dinner us readyy!

Can't really remember anymore. Though.
Bibliography:
Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (1927)

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930)

Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1974

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*
ISBN 0140135154 pbk.

Georgette Chapman Poindexter, *Land Hungry*
Journal of Law and Politics, Spring-Summer 2005
Copyright (c) 2005 Journal of Law and Politics, Inc.; Georgette Chapman Poindexter


Franz Kafka, *The City Coat of Arms* (1920)

Rudyard Kipling, *If* (1895)

Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (1873-1877)

Max Ehrmann, *Desiderata* (1927)