**The best city is no city at all**

English subtitles

A young man, sitting on a rusty hangar, playing his guitar. An abandoned wooden church, no longer needed, relocating to the outskirts of an urban expansion area for cultural interim usage. Nursery school children in a chair circle telling each other what they are NOT doing. In his essay film "Die beste Stadt ist keine Stadt" ("The best city is no city at all"), Christoph Schwarz mixes multiple perspectives on Vienna's largest urban expansion area. They share a sentimental criticism of growth and a romantic refusal to progress while facing imminent ecological collapse, which seems more credible to us than any happy ending. (Daniel Bleninger)

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Offtext

**Chapter 1 / 0:00**

On Sunday the citypeople go to the countryside

whereever they like it, they have a rest

this is how my favourite book from childhood starts

a green meadow is sacrificed for progress

and covered with concrete

one day, the friends from the city come for a visit

"How do you like our meadow?" they are asked

"We don't see any..."

**Chapter 2 / 1:05**

I was riding on a bus when I first noticed it

from the elevated seats in the last row

on the next day, I was already inside

churches are never locked up

it wasn't used anymore

maybe everyone assumed god in the more comfortable neighbouring church

so I claimed the church was mine

just like an american dream:

believe in it long enough

and it becomes truth

**Chapter 3 / 1:59**

At the southern end of the the former airfield

where the new city ends

there's a car factory since the 1960s

I grew up in this neighbourhood

As a teenager, at the age of 15 or 16

I sat on a rusted hangar

I overlooked the factory and played songs by Oasis on my guitar

"Wonderwall" and "Don't look back in anger", you know

massive urban expension in this area was not an option then

Nowadays, instead of my hangar

there's the drive-in of a fast food restaurant

I stopped playing guitar many years ago

**Chapter 4 / 3:08**

At some point, the property redevelopment was decided

a "modern housing project with underground parking" will be built

the church has to leave, immediately!

so we took it apart

we numbered all the wooden slats, bars and linoleum tiles

15.000 pieces

and rebuilt it here on the hill, in the north of the new city

we left out the cross

it felt strange to remount it

nevertheless our activities also take place on Sunday

"The sunday provides unused metaphysical potential"

I hear myself saying

**Chapter 5 / 4:21**

The new city is close to the flight path of the airport

video shots by a drone are illegal here

the airport's capacity is often at its maximum

then the planes fly in waiting loops around the city

which increases the pollution

for this reason a third runway should by built

ecology and economy stand in no contradiction

is written on the airport's website

and our wealth will be increased!

**Chapter 6 / 5:22**

the symbol and main landmark for the new city is the artificial lake

after swimming I get to talk to kindergarten teacher B.

she is "undergoing an apprenticeship"

the work in the outskirts is much more comfortable

we share a cigarette

B. smiles and proudly explains "her invention"

what she's doing if her children's group gets restless

all the kids sit in a circle

and explain, what they are NOT doing at the moment

she calls this "creative omission"

what the kids like about it:

if you don't mess up the space

you don't have to clean it afterwards

**Chapter 7 / 6:32**

At the end of the year...

there's some money left in the marketing department

quickly, ten electric scooter are bought

which makes a good impression

the next year, the company is rewarded a sustainability prize

a plate is mounted

a prize for unspent money was never announced

**Chapter 8 / 7:25**

A metrostation in the middle of nowhere is our only neighbour

it brings trains full of people

who watch soccer together

"a field mass, that's for sure" an older man jokes

on sunday, there's no soccer

we play a first-person-shooter with old friends

when everybody's gone, we drink canned beer

and listen to the sounds of the growing city

we already assigned the street names

in the northern part of the new city

which upsets others

**Chapter 9 / 8:39**

"Most movies playing in the future are dystopias

do you know why?"

I make a guess: "Maybe because catastrophes always fascinated us?"

the danish film producer smiles

"The future is always dystopian

because that's more plausible!

the people anticipate rather the big collapse

than a system change

Can you believe it?

The catastrophe is more plausible!

**Chapter 10 / 9:48**

Whenever it's possible we should consume "products from the region"

that's something we all can agree on

if the car engine doesn't start

the people of the new city can get a replacement motor

at the neighbouring car factory

directly from the assembly line

maybe even with a cargo bike

that you can rent for free in the new city

to save the high fees for an underground garage

it's cheaper to park outside of the new city

**Chapter 11 / 10:43**

On a lukewarm summerevening, after swimming in the lake

I am invited to have pancakes at a friend's terrace

the neighbour families also came along

they speak of a relaxed life in the new city

the kids could go down and play on the streets

unimaginable in the inner districts!

On my way home I see young families with airbeds and plastic flamingos

they smell of suncream

the new city seems like a holiday resort on the upper adriatic sea

**Chapter 12 / 11:59**

The number of appartments built in the new city

correspondents to the number of empty flats in the old city

on a long term level

venture capital, rich owners...

nobody wants to know details- it's private matter

when the left chaots occupy a house once a year

they are on the cover page of the newspapers

and special police forces come for the enviction

**Chapter 13 / 13:01**

In a few years the cranes and diggers will be here

Instead of the poppy field:

the reversion loop of the new tramway

along with the omnipresent free newspapers

Instead of the wooden church a main shopping street

most likely exactly on this spot:

a drugstore

"But what happens to your chuch?", I ask him

"It will move on!", he says

"Maybe I will give all the wooden slats, bars and linoleum tiles

to friends and colleagues

to my whole contact list

the process of storage as the ultimate social sculpture"

Or I keep it in my basement, as object of speculation

"What do you mean?" I ask

"Only when things are gone, you can miss them."

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