MANY

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Until recently, the sharing economy was seen as a response to contemporary capitalism, with atomization on a massive scale as a resistance to the corporate and state centralism. Today, however, when those collaborative platforms have been transformed into global corporations, that hope seems to have exhausted. This project recovers the original expectations of network economy to propose a solution to the migratory crisis, replacing the massive mobility of people by the massive exchange of knowledge and skills.

MANY is an online platform designed to facilitate migration through exchanges of needs.

Global infrastructure space has perfectly streamlined the movements of billions of products and tens of millions of tourists and cheap laborers, but at a time when over 65 million people in the world are displaced, there are few robust ways to facilitate the migrations of people in response to political, economic, or environmental crises. The nation-state has a dumb on-off button to grant or deny citizenship/asylum. And the NGOcracy offers as its best idea storage in a refugee camp – a form of detention lasting on average 17 years.

Can the legal and logistical ingenuity that lubricates trade or links millions of strangers in the

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sharing economy be applied to a global form of matchmaking between the sidelined talents of migrating populations and a multitude of endeavors and opportunities around the world?

While existing help and exchange networks for asylum seekers face intense opposition from nativist right-wing groups, MANY proposes to diffuse or outwit this opposition by more robustly networking short term visas and exchanges that may not involve travel. Deliberately positioned at a distance from the sharp end of migration emergencies, the platform serves those who want to resettle as well as those who want to keep traveling – who never wanted the citizenship or asylum that the nation withholds or reluctantly bestows. Beyond national

identify, one-to-one relationships share a visual language of exchange where there are no have or have-nots. Instead needs and problems are assets to be linked in non-market exchanges. MANY aggregates an abundance of existing networks and reinforces them with underexploited potentials embedded in urban space. As it develops over multiple iterations, the site hopes to alter habits and reduce the violence surrounding migration. Rejecting the characterization of migration as crisis, MANY asserts the reality of migration as constant.

Might another kind of cosmopolitan mobility organize around intervals of time or seasons of a life to form a branching set of options that is both more practical and politically agile? Can the platform

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guard against the dangers that it critiques and avoid association with the sunny, one-world vision of the sharing economy? And might this exchange be anticipated, celebrated, and accredited as the means to global leadership credentials?

The platform asks users on either side of the exchange to establish and name a group – something like a no-tech blockchain of corroborating associates. In addition to an accredited sponsor for visa procedures, a group might include an educational institution, commercial organization, congregation, or group of citizens among many other things. Each group expresses a need for special talents or expertise in, for instance, education, farming, industry, or other cultural practices. Each also

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offers opportunities or in-kind contributions like housing, stipends or visa assistance. Initially MANY is populated with entries from thousands of existing exchange networks to offer a more palpable that cartography of these organizations.

Countering the repertoires of prevailing matchmaking and sharing sites, the images and sounds contribute to a multi-glyph expression that is used in displaying possible matches in the exchange. Slightly cryptic, the multi-glyph is a language between individuals that is stronger than the official languages of nations. The graphic conceit nods to the work of Fluxus member George Maciunas (Spell your name with these objects), Paul Elliman's typographies, ransom notes, hobo code and cuneiform. The more heterogeneous the multi-glyph, the more it expresses a robust, secure spatial network.

The platform is designed to prompt activity in spatial as well as digital information systems. Criteria can be tightened or loosened to search in different ways or to adapt a network to offerings on the other side of the exchange. As designers forge new connections and add more spatial variables to the situations shaping an offer on the network is already an alteration and an urban design. **ARQ**

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Architect, Princeton University, USA. She has written the books *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space* (Verso, 2014), *Subtraction* (Sternberg Press, 2014), *The Action is the Form: Victor Hugo's ted Talk* (Strelka Press ebook, 2012), *Enduring Innocence: Global Architecture and its Political Masquerades* (MIT Press, 2005) and *Organization Space: Landscapes, Highways and Houses in America* (MIT Press, 1999). Easterling's research and writing was included in the 2014 Venice Biennale, and she has been exhibited at Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York, the Rotterdam Biennale, and the Architectural League in New York. Since 1998 is a professor at Yale University.