



## BEHIND THE SCENES PODCAST WITH TARIK GHEZALI

*Welcome to Manifesta 13 Marseille's podcast. Today we are with Tarik Ghezali, co-founder of Le Tour de Tous les Possibles, one of Manifesta's project.*

**Tarik Ghezali:** My vision of Marseille is one of a very contrasted city. It is both very rich and very poor, and sometimes only a few kilometres away, or even metres away. It is one of the most unequal cities of France. The revenue disparity between the richest and the poorest neighbourhood can vary between 1 to 50. It is also a contrasted city because there are some incredible landscapes and at the same time a sort of urban anarchy with motorways that cross the city and brush past balconies, making it unbearable for many people.

It is also contrasted because the associations are very dynamic, there are many volunteers and generosity and at the same time there are tension and violence.

Another contrast is the fact that the population is young, and the policy makers are old. Marseille's mayor for the past 25 years, Jean-Claude Gaudin, is 80 years old.

It is also, to me, an "archipelago" city. It seems socially mixed, but this is only so in a few central neighbourhoods. It is actually not mixed: poor people stay amongst poor people, rich bourgeois stay amongst rich bourgeois, same with hipsters... Sometimes, there are parts of the city that are mixed and give the impression that Marseille is a cosmopolitan city but that happens less and less. Public transportation is an illustration of that: it is lacking in the city and this lack makes it difficult for people to mix together.

That is why the theme of the biennial "traits d'union.s" is very interesting. It is really welcomed to recreate links, to form community (collectiveness), to create "us" and to reduce segregation. And *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles* fits in this vision.

This project emerged from a very simple assessment: the fact that Marseille's inhabitants are the solution and not the problem. It is with them that the big challenges the city faces will be solved. Whether it is unemployment, pollution, school dropouts, lack of public transportation, violence etc.

This conviction is at the heart of our approach. In concrete terms, how does it translate? We are actually doing something that has rarely been done in this city. We are taking very diverse and different citizens of Marseille, from different social backgrounds that would normally not meet, and we mix them together, in a creative and convivial atmosphere to let them think about possible futures.

These citizens of Marseille can for example be students from the KEDGE business school with prisoners from the Baumettes prison. It can be construction workers with people from the posh neighbourhood of Endoume. It can be Ricard's employees, a large company of Marseille, with refugees and artists ...etc. And we create the workshops in beautiful and emblematic venues, such as the Fort St Nicolas, les Baumettes, le Théâtre du Centaure, l'Alambra, le Carburateur, le Château Ricard and more.

We bring together about 20 different people per workshop and the process is always more or less the same: there are three stages. The first stage of "inspirations" where we kick off from the work that was done by Winy Maas' team and Manifesta's team on *Le Grand Puzzle*. We start from the conclusion that there



are six Marseilles that were identified. Six Marseilles of the future: Inclusive Marseille, Clean Marseille, Accessible Marseille, etc.

Each group picks up a theme, and afterwards we make them work through quizzes, maps, brainstorming, to get interesting ideas. Each group – that is divided into sub-groups- works on the best ideas and reproduces them through unusual formats such as a map of Marseille, the frontpage of a futuristic local newspaper or a touristic leaflet of Marseille in 2050. It is a way to do things out of the ordinary, to do new things. There are hundreds of possible that come out of the workshops and we therefore go from *Le Grand Puzzle* to the great mosaic of possible. That's the arrival point of the project: to produce all those projects through artistic forms that will be defined in a second stage within Manifesta.

Marseille is adapted to *Le Tour de tous les Possibles*. More than adapted, it needs it. We are in a city where inhabitants are not included into local public policy making. There is not, or not much, participative budget. There isn't a structured and durable dialogue between citizens, elected representatives and civil servants. There is no great and impactful participative project in education, mobility, health or more. You can see that the population isn't involved with the very high abstention. During the last election, in 2014, there was between 40 and 55% of abstention, and during the last local election, it was up to 66%. It was special because of COVID, but if you compare it to other big cities in France, it is by far the city where people voted the least. Inhabitants are not included, and they must be.

*Le Tour de Tous les Possibles* aim is to contribute -even the slightest- to the citizens involvement into the future of their city. Especially since we are in a city where we don't talk about the future – it is something that strikes me. It is the oldest city of France; it has a dense history and very few prospects. There are no debates, no outlook on the future, apart than trying to do like Berlin, Barcelona, Paris or New-York. Those models are dreamy but do not fit in with Marseille, its history and its population, its assets and its flaws. We hence need to discuss and to invent a new future that matches with Marseille's singularities. *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles* is in line with this approach by starting from the citizens of Marseille, their dreams, their wishes and their proposals. We think that from that we can build a big mosaic of projects that fits in with the DNA of what Marseille is.

The outcome of *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles* is to complete successfully the 25 workshops that will take place until June or September – depending on the end of the COVID crisis. To succeed these creative workshops with these very different inhabitants of Marseille but also make sure that some of the ideas are really implemented in real life, which could be for us Manifesta's legacy in Marseille. It is not only a biennial that comes and goes, there are things that will stay and amongst them some projects coming from *Le Tour de Tous les Possibles*.

I can mention a few examples on which we are already working. One of the ideas that came out of the workshops is the "Paquebot Radieux" (radiant cruise), referring to the well-known Cité Radieuse of Le Corbusier. The idea is to get a ship that isn't being used and to turn it into an unprecedented animated space where different public meet, and with different functions: housing, shops, care, schools, culture, restaurants, shelters. The idea is to create a sort of city within the city on a boat in the Vieux-Port.

Another utopian idea, even more utopian, is the green walkway, where they imagined a long green walkway above the roofs of Marseille to discover the city.

There are ideas that are very utopian, sometimes very ambitious, but also sometimes very concrete and practical. For example, to exploit some of the shopping centres' parking, or to use the waiting time for buses or tubes – sadly those waiting times are long as there is a public transportation issue in Marseille.



The idea is to use this time through screens, kiosks and smartphones, to access opportunities like exhibition tickets or job opportunities.

Another example is to build concrete partnerships between schools of Northern districts, poorer districts, and of Southern districts, richer, to make sure students and teachers meet and do things together, build common projects. There are lots of ideas that come out of the workshops and we are trying to make sure that some are implemented, as Manifesta's legacy.

*Thank you, Tarik, for this podcast recorded from home, and thank you for listening. More to come on Manifesta 13 Marseille.*