



COMMONS IN A RURAL DREAM

Universal Basic Income Cookbook and the New Domestic Landscape

Sam Chermayeff + Danica Selem

"Rural and urban America clearly have distinct politics, one emphasizing individualism and limited government, the other shared commons that require bigger government."*

This divide is in the context of extreme societal changes wherein neither option functions independently. In the face of automation, rising inequality and mass climate change migrations we can either escape or bond together. And, while our particular politics inclines us toward a shared endeavor with our countrymen there is much to be understood in the countryside.

The American desire for independence can be meaningful and wholistic beyond individual us vs. them attitudes. At many points in US history it appeared that the resources available could, without much intervention, provide for all. In a very basic sense the American dream was a real thing and it still is. But, it is not going to happen through 'hard work' in its next iteration. The trend is in the opposite direction. Capital begets wealth and working begets less and less. We have to accept that robots are going to do the work so we're going to have to agree on a new system of distribution, maybe reimagining the original distribution of land that we once gave out to whomever first arrived. Our studio posits that Universal Basic Income is the next path to independence. Money, replaces the land as the resource from which we thrive, think and create. Paradoxically, this change reconnects us to land, a resource that we continue to have in abundance. Universal Basic income changes the value of land writ large.

In embracing Universal Basic Income we'll find that the labor and wage part of the American dream morphs into other pursuits. We'll leave modern thinking and the idea of the universal architectural answer in favor of the specific.

The topic of this change is potentially endless, and while we cannot predict the future, we can begin to imagine what a world without labor would look like. The idea of the center and edge condition, which defines the contemporary metropolis, will also change. Rural environments may become as valid as urban ones, from a cost point of view. And while cities force a certain communal experience, rural living doesn't.

We will embrace that and focus on the rural. At the same time we will reimagine the rural living landscape and the idea of private and public, creating the specific individual in relationship to the new commons. We will create new domestic landscapes for a UBI world without work where the notion of domestic itself is bound to change.

We'll read about Universal Basic Income and Degrowth.** We'll create a future that allows people to live in new, different and authored ways. We are talking about reordering our world.

We're about the rural commons. We're drawing communities.
We're growing, we're cooking, we're eating.

*"The Suburbs Are Changing. But Not in All the Ways Liberals Hope." The New York Times, Emily Badger, Quoc Trung Bui and Josh Katz, November 26, 2018.

**Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams "Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work", VERSO, 2016

Giacomo D'Alisa & Federico Demaria & Giorgos Kallis "Degrowth: A vocabulary for a new era, Routledge, 2016

Albert Wenger "World After Capital", 2016 - <http://worldaftercapital.org>