

NEWS

PROJECT

Home Silk Road - Housing toward empowerment

Lyon Metropole, France

TOPIC

Housing

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# Point de CHU...T: Rap, Slam & the City for All!

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Point de CHU...T is a rap and slam project developed at the initiative of young people living in emergency shelter on the site of the Home Silk Road UIA project in Villeurbanne, Lyon Metropole.

## Background

An industrial site in the *Carré de Soie* area, formerly home to the local silk industry, is being transformed into a new residential neighbourhood. The Home Silk Road project has turned this site into a space for culture, inclusion, and the digital and social economy during its transformation. People living there and many others from the community have been able to participate in a rich cultural programme. Point de CHU...T is one of many artistic and cultural initiatives happening here. It is an example of how culture and inclusion can be brought together and re-enforce one another.

## Emergency shelter

The Alfred Musset emergency shelter accommodates 21 families on the project site. The families have migrated to France and are waiting for administrative decisions on regularisation. Many have been trying to obtain legal residency for years and are stuck in a legal limbo. They are accommodated under 6-month renewable contracts. The shelter is run by project partner Alynéa, which provides support as well as accommodation. Initially accommodated in a disused building, the shelter moved into [modular housing](#) in January 2021.

## A project by and for young people

Point de CHU...T was initiated by young people living with their families at the Alfred Musset emergency shelter. These adolescents experience marginalisation because of their precarious status, navigate complex questions of identity and belonging, whilst supporting their parents and other family members and trying to become more independent. Point de CHU...T emerged as a way of articulating their unique experiences and engaging in an exciting creative process at a critical time in their lives.

## More than a year of work

The project supported young people to write, produce and perform slam and rap with the support of professional artists. They participated in weekly workshops, courses during school holidays, master classes with artists, as well as giving performances.

One of the artists was Tracy De Sá, an award-winning rising star in French rap. She worked with young people to help them put their texts to music and explore their voices. Another was a local female rap trio, UltraMoule, who worked with the young people in workshops on digital composition.

The project culminated in a performance on October 2 2021 at the *L'Aventure Ordinaire* festival organized by the CCO La Rayonne. The young people gave a very well-received 30-minute concert to the general public. Further plans include studio recordings and more concerts. A documentary about the project by filmmaker Slimane Bounia is expected soon.

## Impact

This project enabled young people to articulate their experiences and challenges through rap and slam. It provided an opportunity for personal and collective growth as well as to show the wider community their capacity to act and express themselves artistically. By writing, producing and performing rap and slam, with the support of established artists, these young people have addressed *inter alia* issues of identity, culture, violence and gender. They have asserted their choices, gained confidence, exercised critical thinking, engaged positively with others and learned a lot more besides.

Point de CHU...T was enabled by the integration of culture and inclusion on the *Home Silk Road* site. Additional social worker capacity at the CHU Alfred Musset in the context of the UIA project has also contributed to the emergence of this initiative and others.

## Partners

Point de CHU...T was coordinated by two partners in the Home Silk Road Project: CCO La Rayonne, a laboratory for social and cultural innovation, and Alynéa an NGO providing accommodation and support. They worked with Maison de quartier des Brosses and Association Acolea. The project was financed by the Nexity Foundation and the UIA project.

Quote

“This was one of the most rewarding professional experiences of my career. Beyond the artistic dimension, the young people were able to experience the importance of a collective, of working together, of finding one's place by taking care of others and respecting them for their uniqueness.”

Frédéric Glock, Social Worker, Alynéa

Quote

“Point de CHU... T is, for me, a second family. Every week for a year, we got together to work on writing texts, producing music and learning to express ourselves to get our beautiful message across: despite our difficult circumstances, we're able to keep smiling and project the best of ourselves... We've got to know each other better and better and now we're united by our past, our stories, our texts and our future. I am proud of us. Now we are part of the world of music and particularly of RAP”

Melisa alias l'Albash, Project participant and rap artist

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