

Tourism, similarly to art, has come a long way — from the elite expeditions of the European aristocracy, known as the *Grand Tour*, to egalitarian holidays in Egypt purchased at a promotional *last minute* price. From educated, young elites traveling to commune with art, architecture and foreign cultures, to members of the leisure class, spending time by the hotel swimming pool. From Vedutis painters who offered their landscapes as souvenirs from distant journeys, to consumption for show — internet exhibitionists who spent their entire trip taking photos with the help of inseparable smartphones.

One can ask — what next? In which direction will tourism and our society go? Will the phenomenon of *post-tourism* and simulation of mobility through electronic images be a consistent consequence of social changes? Are we inevitably replacing our reality with its ecstatic imitation? Is there a way for the *baudrillardian* simulacrum to become a *maccannellian* marker? Something Umberto Eco wrote about in relation to the American hyper-reality?

These questions were a significant inspiration for the creation of the **Stettin** project — a work combining the features of a video game, a virtual tourist experience, and an interactive oil painting based on the art of painting city landscapes (veduta). A work that is a bridge between what is mass, egalitarian, contemporary and what is authentic, elitist, classic.

The opportunity offered by the virtuality of the tourist experience opens up new, previously unknown possibilities — to reach non-existent places, learn about forgotten cultures and beliefs, experience authenticity in the most raw and undisturbed form (which was so longed by Claude Lévi-Strauss). Hence the decision to place the project in the German Stettin at the beginning of the 20th century. The period in which the city experienced its greatest prosperity, when the now-defunct houses of Bollwerk Street hosted consulates of countries from all over the world, when the *Vulcan* shipyard produced the largest, fastest and most luxurious ocean liners in the world, and Emperor William II himself regularly visited the city, during military maneuvers or launching new ships. To allow a virtual tourist to visit a city that does not exist anymore, at least in the actual, real form.