

# AtWork

"Concept vs Slogan. The Group Show. *Ecriture  
Infinie/Cadavre Exquis*"

Milan, Italy  
Nov 24-25<sup>th</sup> and Nov 29-30<sup>th</sup>, 2016



# What is AtWork?



AtWork is an itinerant educational format, conceived by *lettera27* and Simon Njami, that uses the creative process to stimulate critical thinking and debate among the participants. It contributes to inspire a new generation of thinkers. AtWork has started its journey in 2012 in Dakar and since then it continued to travel around the African continent and beyond with the vision to inspire a panafrikan network of creative thinkers.

# AtWork format

## Workshop

The key element of AtWork is a workshop conducted by an artist or a curator on the chosen topic. The topic stimulates the collective discussion and a personal self-reflection on issues such as identity, culture, community, etc. As a final output of the workshop each student produces a personalized notebook.



## Exhibition

The produced notebooks are exhibited in an art show, co-curated by the students themselves. The participants may then choose to donate their works to *lettera27* collection of 'artist notebooks', unique pieces of work created by different artists on Moleskine notebooks. The collection is used to help support *lettera27's* activities.



## Community

All the workshop participants become part of the AtWork Community, a group of international artists, students, curators, cultural organizations, intellectuals, who believe that art can be a tool for social transformation.

# AtWork workshop in collaboration with FARE | Milan, Italy

**AtWork Milan** first workshop was held on **November 24-25<sup>th</sup>** at **Frigoriferi Milanesi** in collaboration with **FARE**, and the second one on **November 29-30<sup>th</sup>** in collaboration with **Leo Burnett agency** at **Primo Marella Gallery** in Milan.

The collaboration with FARE was born out of the synchronicity of the shared values, programs and goals. Through its international network of partners FARE for years has been involved in training and mobility of the young artists, in particular in the form of residencies.



*Frigoriferi Milanesi*



# AtWork workshop in collaboration with FARE | Milan, Italy

FARE was founded in 2008 with the aim to enhance and promote contemporary culture in the field of visual arts with an interdisciplinary perspective. It interacts with public and private entities in a vision of networking and by sharing of interests, projects, strategies. The result are the articulation and management of national and international networks in the field of training and mobility for artists, curators and cultural professionals. In 2010 FARE has created AIR – artinresidence, the only Italian network of artist residencies, becoming in Italy the reference body for the mobility of artists. Besides working with the traditional format of the residence, FARE develops exchange programs in collaboration with international partners. These programs are based on interdisciplinary research, sharing of knowledge, exchange of experience and they investigate different areas of interest: the know-how of residential practices; the relationship between art and the public sphere; audience development.



*Barbara Oteri and Beatrice Oleari,  
founders of FARE*

## AtWork workshop with Bili Bidjocka | Milan, Italy

The first part of AtWork workshop was organized in collaboration with FARE and involved local art students and young creative talents. The workshop was conducted by an exceptional artist **Bili Bidjocka**. Cameroonian by origin and Parisian by choice, Bili is a long-time friend and partner of *lettera27*. An alliance born out of elective affinities through his work of art **Ecriture Infinie**.

The inspiration for this “**double date**” was **Cadavre Exquis**: the collective game by surrealists that gave birth to the idea of infinite writing as a creative form to produce shared meanings as opposed to the individual ones. It was with this spirit that the two workshops titled “**Concept vs Slogan. The Group Show. Ecriture Infinie/Cadavre Exquis**” has put together a group of young creative talents studying various art forms and a group of young advertising professionals. Their experiences took place in two different moments, but were connected in the end .



# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion

The first group of art students opened the game, tackling the idea of the artistic concept as opposed to the advertising one. A musical counterpoint rather than a juxtaposition. The discussion started from the conflictual relationship that is often attributed to these two hemispheres of expression, but the goal was to overcome this stereotype. This point of view of the opposition was questioned. The discussion was not about "right" or "wrong", but about different ways to be creative in the XXI century.



# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion



# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion



# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion

A photograph showing two women sitting in white chairs, engaged in a discussion. The woman on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a dark jacket. The woman on the right has curly dark hair and is wearing a blue sweatshirt with a white and pink graphic of hands. She is holding a pen to her lips. The background is a plain white wall with a window showing blinds.

Carlotta Boattini:

*"I have always had the need to put my energy and ideas in somewhere concrete, so I am a painter and a musician too. Can we define who we are or what is around us? I spend most of my time trying to answer this question. AtWork gave me the chance to compare myself with this theme and with other people too, which I found most interesting and challenging as well."*

# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion



# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion



# Workshop In Progress | Collective Discussion



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Production

As a result of the discussion the participants of the first workshop started their artwork on the Moleskine notebooks which later was finished by the participants of the second workshop from Leo Burnett agency.





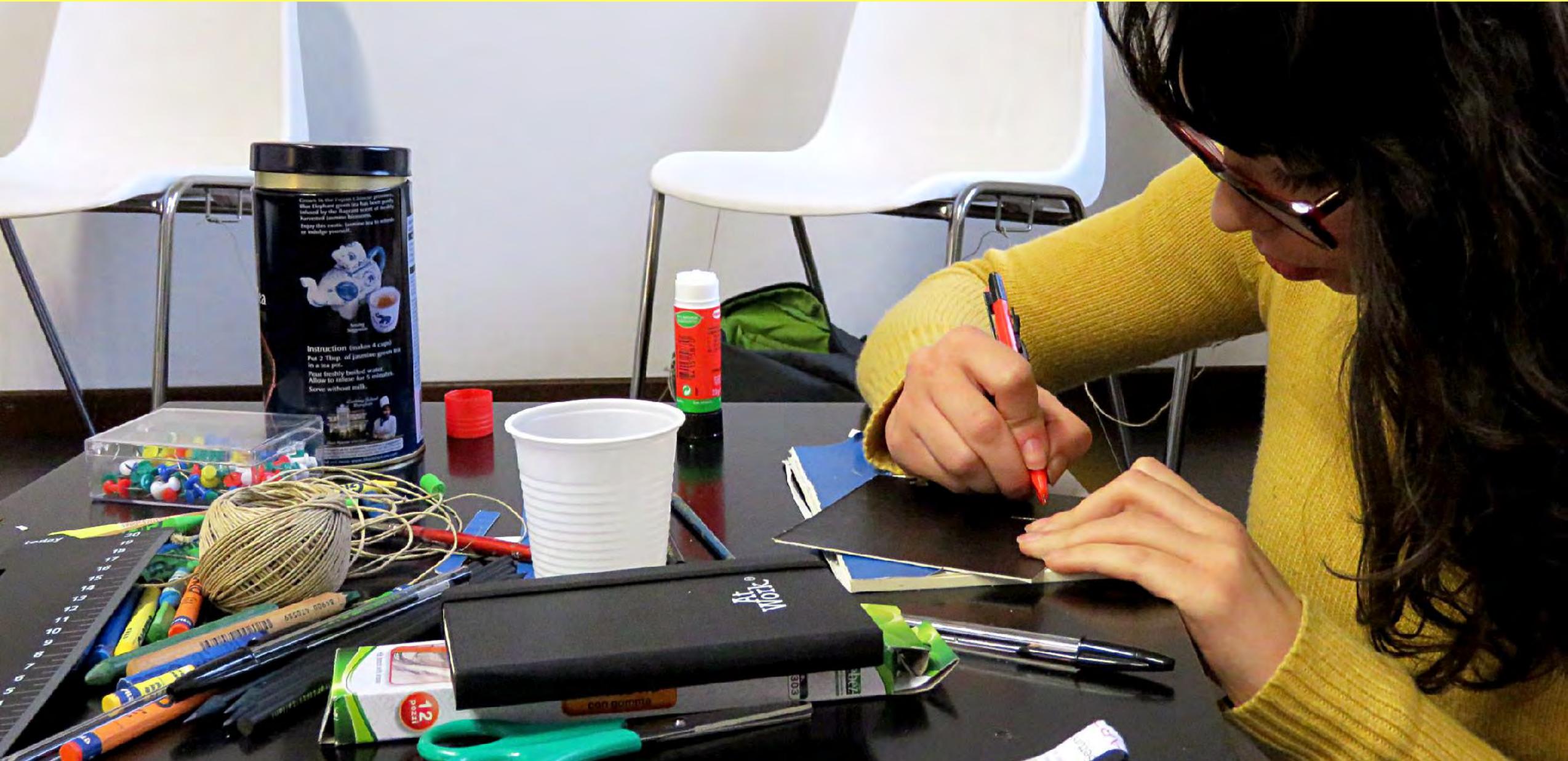
# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Production



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Production



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Production



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Presentation

At the end of the workshop participants presented their notebooks and the concepts behind them.

Carlotta Boattini:

*"Concept vs slogan, I tried to give a visual definition to those ideas and I realized they are the same. Referring to Bili's artwork Ecriture Infinie, I used my notebook as a support where the concept and the slogan live together, in the same exact form, but in different colors. To my mind, slogan is the punctual action that comes from a process defined by time, concentration, effort, study, repetition, collection, experience. It is clear and decoded summary. Such as handwriting is the concrete form of thoughts and cannot overlook practice. In my opinion, visual art moves the same steps. Letting other people "complete" our notebooks has put all this in a new and undefined prospective."*



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Presentation



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Presentation

Francesca Ceriani and Agnieszka Fajferk:

*„We thought it could be challenging in a good way to go out of one's comfort zone and start to look at things in a way never imagined before. The notebook suddenly becomes a journal. A journal in which we gave out some 'indications', or suggestions, which will give some sort of guidance to the next person picking it up. The indications are a way of seeing art and any artwork in a different manner than usual. These suggestions entice the receiver to go beyond what is on the surface, in order to better grasp the concept that lies beneath and to challenge their mind on what constitutes art. In opposition to these concepts, we placed some slogans we found lying around in old art magazines. Their silliness and superficiality striked us to be explanatory of what we wished to communicate. Placing them next to one another, the versus is somehow annihilated and the two opposite ideas click: what if with a better understanding of art, new and better slogans can be created? What if bad advertisement can be fought, with just a different point of view shining on the promoted artwork?“*



# Workshop In Progress | Notebooks Presentation



# Participants

Zazzaro Otto

Carlotta Mansi

Dimitri Piccolillo

Raffaella Carillo

Carlotta Boattini

Francesca Ceriani

Rebecca Brignone

Raffaele Bellezza

Agnieszka Fajferek

Theophilus Kwesi Imani

Giovanni Dall'Avo Manfroni



# Participants



# Participants



# Participants



# The Group Show | Co-created Notebooks Presentation

During the second workshop the advertising professionals went through the same process. The two groups met at a later moment during the Group Show, where the co-created notebooks were exhibited revealing the final output of the process. This experience of sharing, of questioning oneself and one's certainties, of having the two creative outputs speak with each other becoming an art piece in itself.



# The Group Show | Co-created Notebooks Presentation



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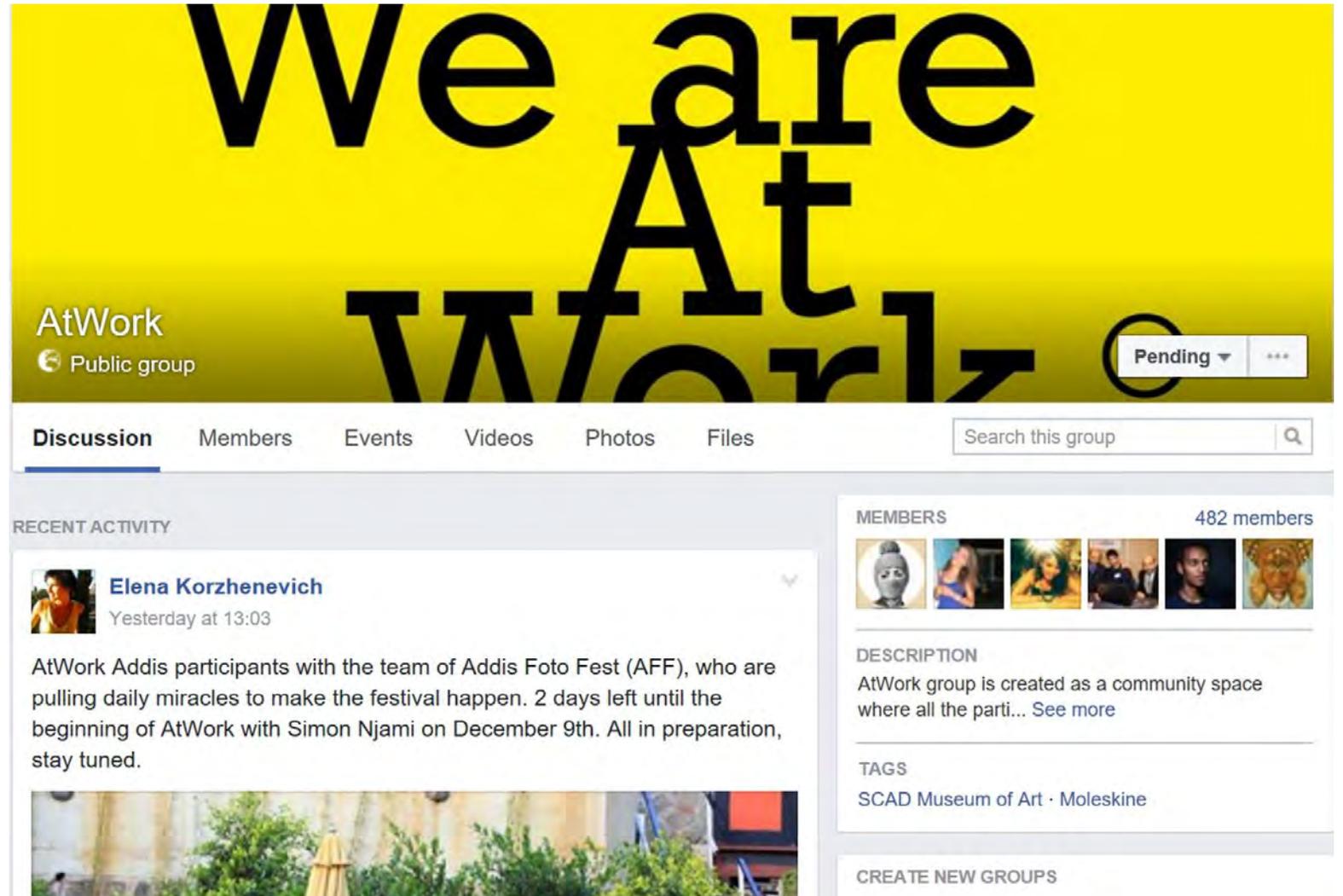


# The Group Show | Co-created Notebooks Presentation



# Communication & Social Networking

An AtWork group was created on Facebook, where participants can share their thoughts on the workshop, post pictures/videos/articles related to the workshop experience and to their artistic practices in general. The community is meant to be a space for the participants to interact with each other, as well as with the hosting cultural organizations, curators, artists and other AtWork chapters' participants, creating an international network to exchange, get exposure for their work and find out about various calls and residencies opportunities. The participants actively embraced the Facebook community and continue to engage with it even after the workshop is over.



The image shows a screenshot of the AtWork Facebook group page. The cover photo features the text "we are AtWork" in large, bold, black letters on a yellow background. The group name "AtWork" is displayed in the top left, with "Public group" below it. A "Pending" status indicator is visible in the top right. The navigation menu includes "Discussion", "Members", "Events", "Videos", "Photos", and "Files". A search bar labeled "Search this group" is located on the right. The "RECENT ACTIVITY" section shows a post by Elena Korzhenevich from yesterday at 13:03, with the text: "AtWork Addis participants with the team of Addis Foto Fest (AFF), who are pulling daily miracles to make the festival happen. 2 days left until the beginning of AtWork with Simon Njami on December 9th. All in preparation, stay tuned." Below the post is a photo of an outdoor setting with greenery and a building. The "MEMBERS" section shows 482 members with a row of profile pictures. The "DESCRIPTION" section states: "AtWork group is created as a community space where all the parti... See more". The "TAGS" section lists "SCAD Museum of Art" and "Moleskine". A "CREATE NEW GROUPS" button is visible at the bottom.

# AtWork Milan 2016 | FARE

AtWork Milan 2016

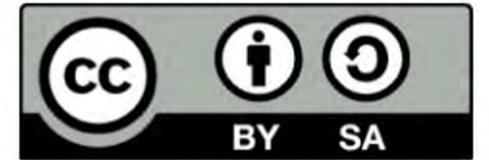
A project by lettera27

In partnership with:

FARE <http://farearte.org/>  
and <http://artinresidence.it>

Photos by Agnieszka Fajerek

At  
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**FARE**

**ART** THE NETWORK  
OF RESIDENCES