Neglected Utopia: Photographer explores the forgotten modernist estates of Paris

14th February in Photography
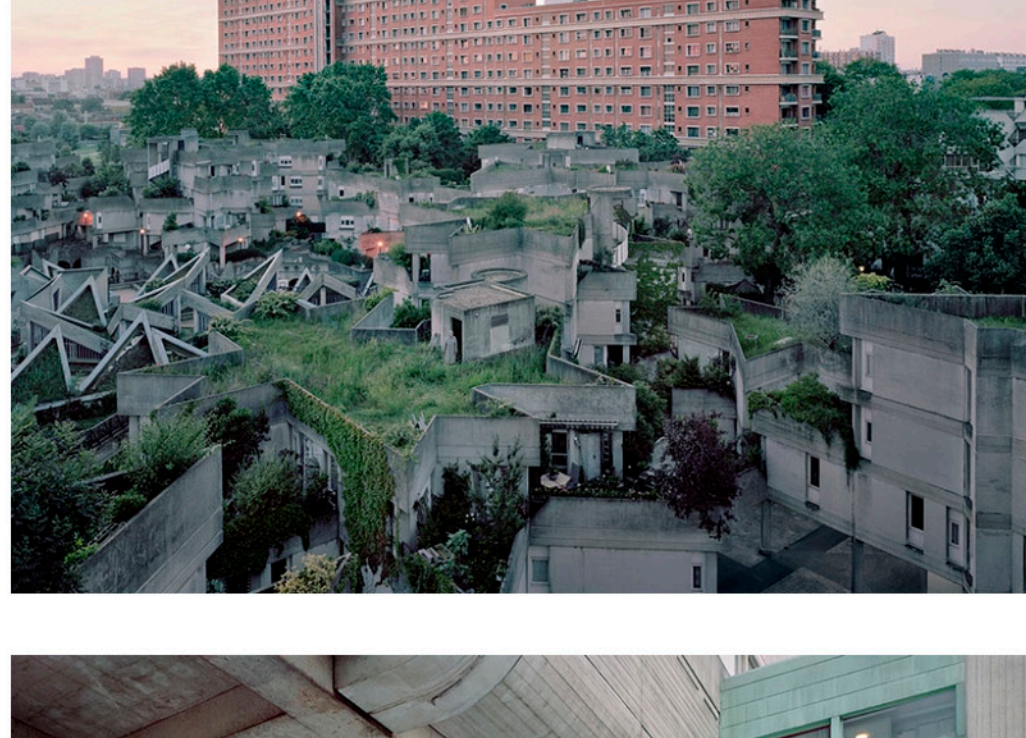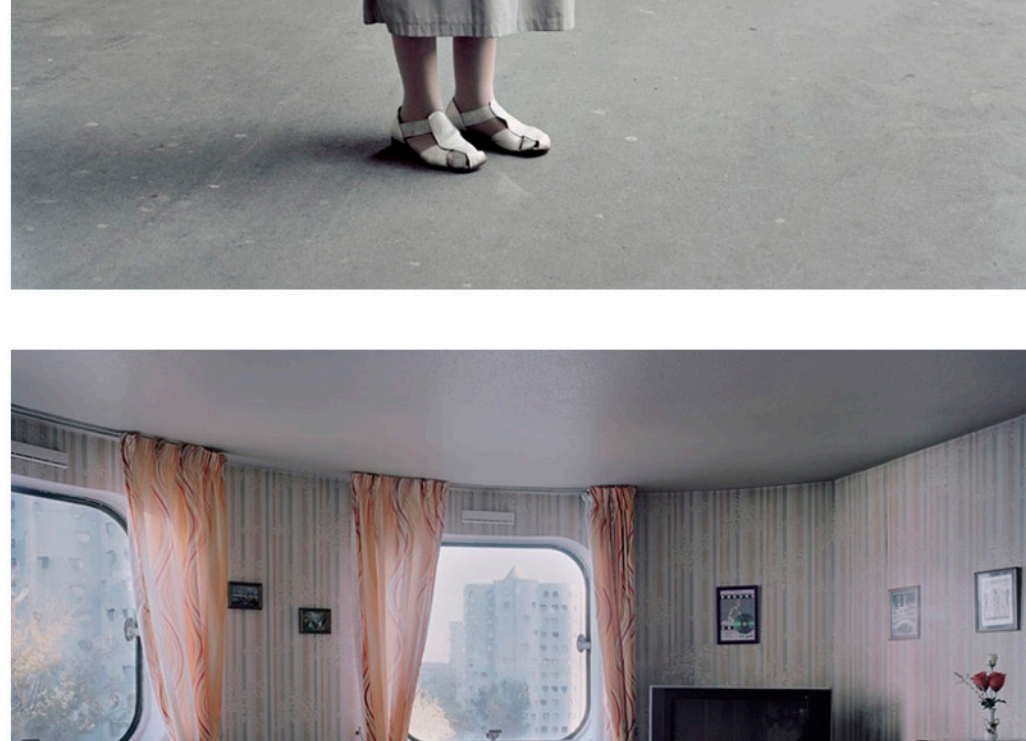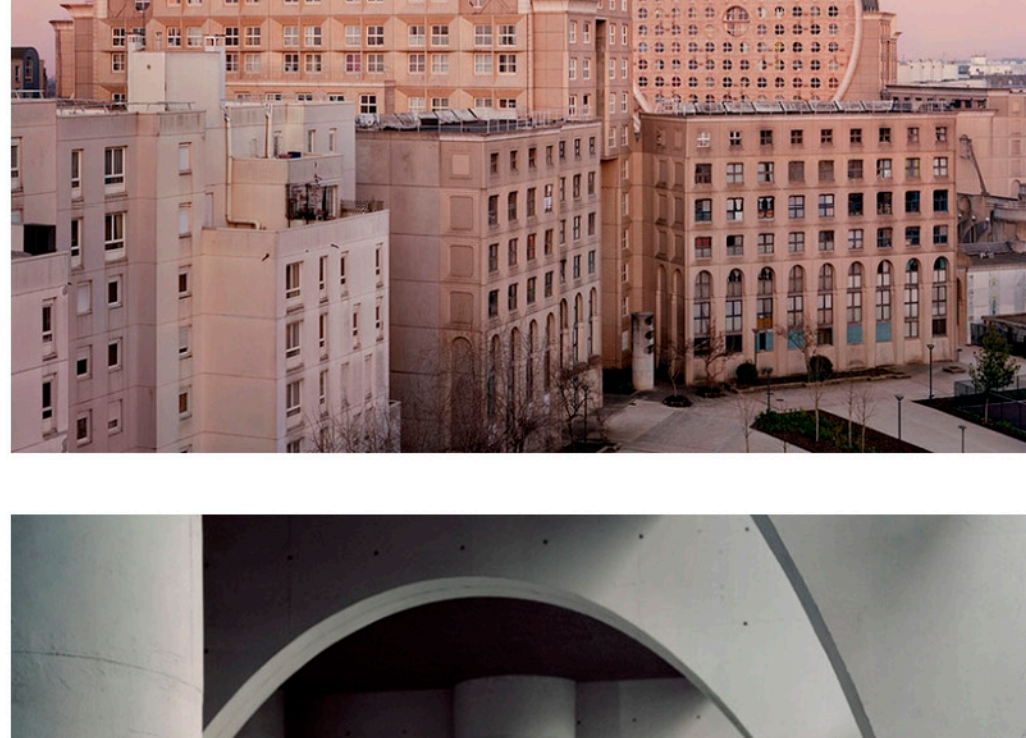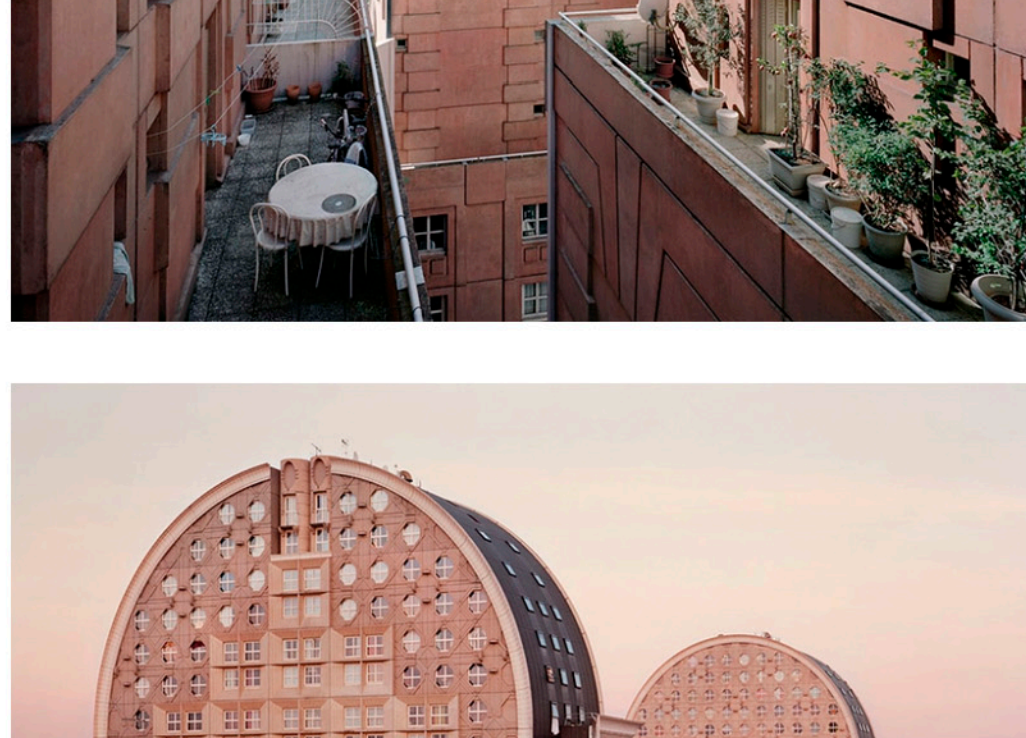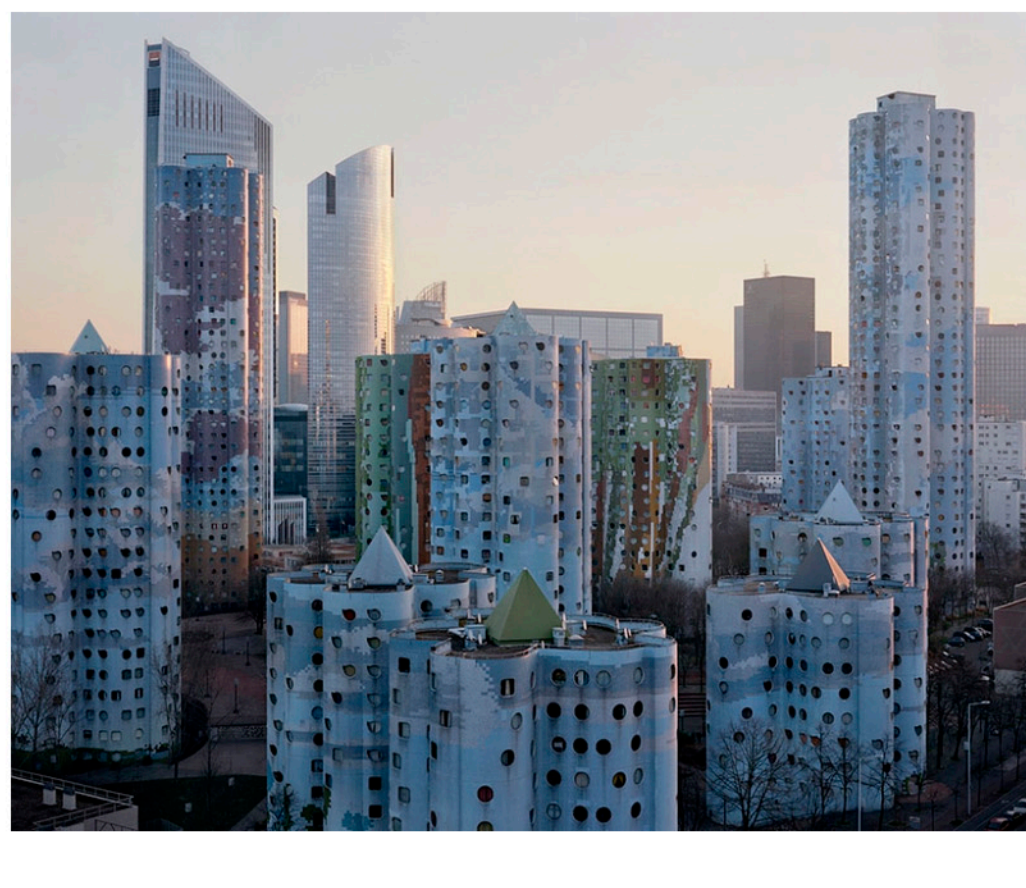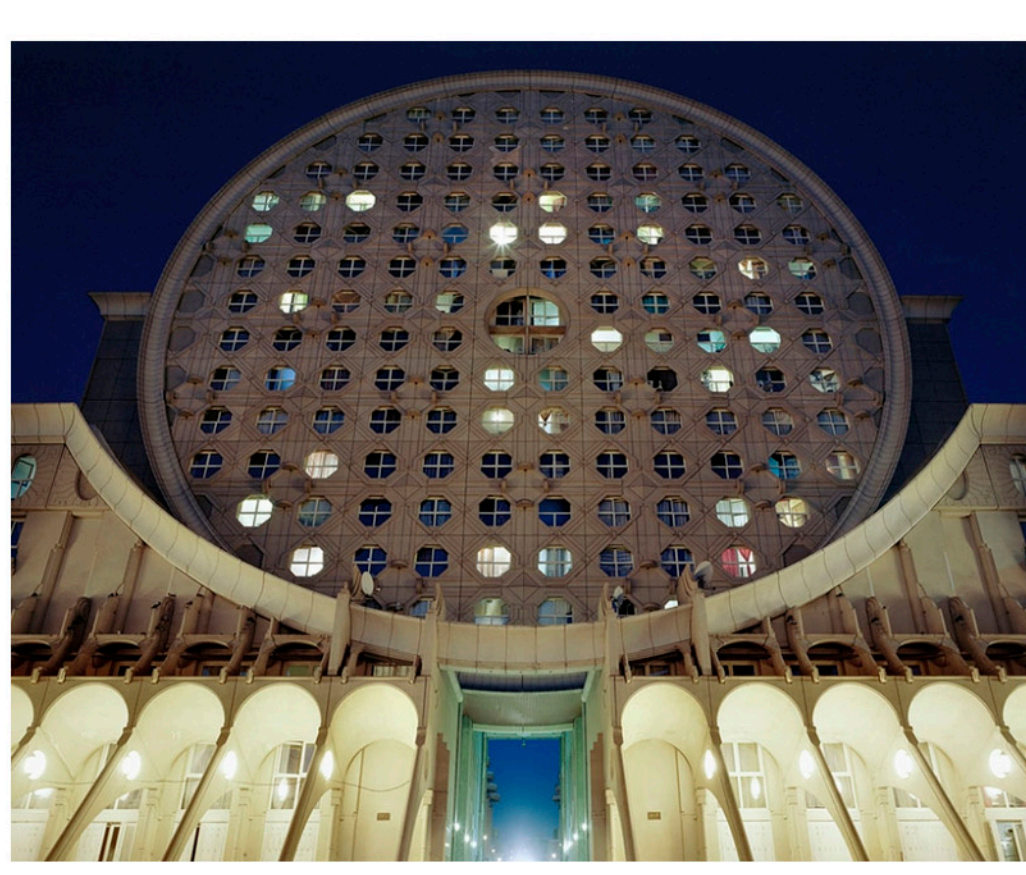
From the 1950s to the 1980s, Paris was booming. Foreign migration and
urbanisation of the city caused a huge surge in population and a crisis for
housing. France's solution came in the form of vast housing projects and so
during this period massive, modernist and really quite unique estates sprung up
across the city – aiming for a new way of living.

Just a few decades later and these towering buildings look dated, discarded and
forgotten. Often stigmatised by the media, they divide opinion in France and
have been left mostly occupied by the aging community of 'urban veterans' who
first made it their home, as the younger generation are drawn to more
contemporary city living.

Local photographer Laurent Kronental has become fascinated by the 'ambitious
and dated modernist features' of these estates, known locally as 'Grands
Ensembles'. Since 2011 he has developed 'Souvenir d'un Futur', a series of
stunning photographs documenting these neglected communities and capturing
what he calls 'the poetry of aging environments'. He also explores the idea of the
aspirational 'utopia' design concept with the neglected state they are in today,
by consciously conveying the impression of towns that have been left almost
empty.

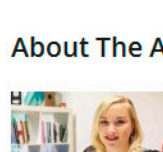Images all © Laurent Kronental
Via Bored Panda

f ⌂ ✆ 𝕡 in 🔖 ☟ 4.7K

About The Author - Becci Sharpe

Ex-publisher, creole traveller and dedicated book nerd, Becci is a publicist and
writer from Manchester with a passion for the arts and creative cultural events. Find
her on Twitter @mrsBecksSharp