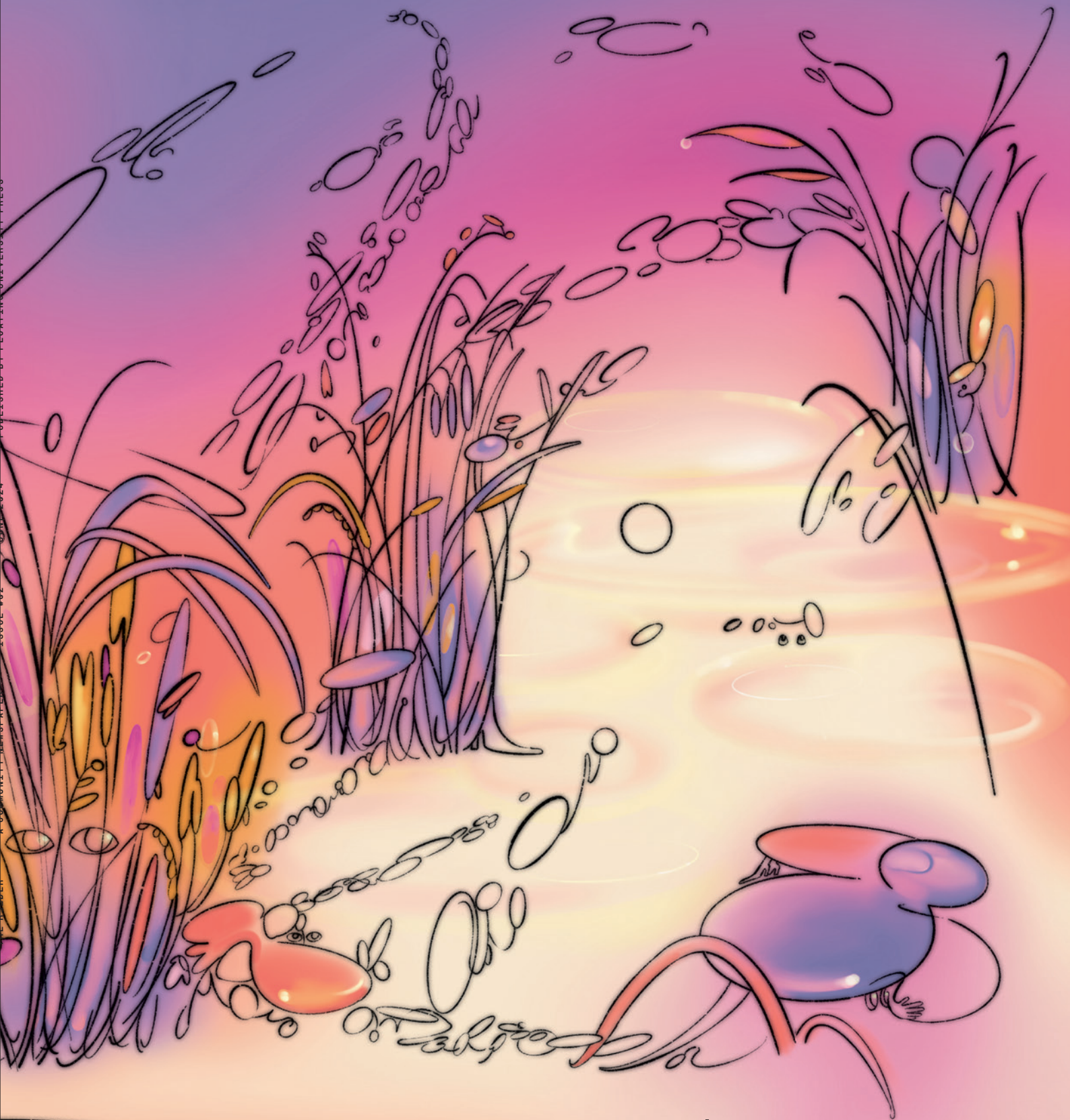


the reeder
issue #01



the reeder
issue #02

Liebe Leeeeeeeeeeeeeeser*innen,

Dies ist die zweite Ausgabe des Readers, der Community Zeitung der Floating. Der Reeder ist eine Sammlung von Stimmen aus unserer erweiterten Gemeinschaft, die auf die eine oder andere Weise mit dem berühmt-berüchtigten Regenrückhaltebecken in Berlin Kreuzberg zu tun haben, in dem wir uns nun schon seit einigen Jahren befinden.

Diese Ausgabe #02 verwebt Mythen über die Gründung der Floating, mit Geschichten über unsere anhaltende Präsenz vor Ort und spekulativen Legenden über eine mögliche Zukunft, die noch vor uns liegt. Alles ist teilweise wahr, gleichermaßen fiktiv und ganz bewusst unvollständig.

Auf den folgenden Seiten lest ihr von der Entdeckung einer vergessenen Wasserinfrastruktur und ihrer Wiederaneignung, von Feldnotizen über Moosgefährt*innen, von Hydro-Poesie, von einer beschwerlichen Suche nach einem geweihten Feigenbaum, von ortsspezifischen Kreuzworträtseln, von winterlichen Grillrezepten, von einem Phänologischen Kalender, sowie von Stimmen und Eindrücken aus anderen urbanen und an Ufern gelegenen Widerstandsräumen in São Paulo, Brasilien, oder Dhaka, Bangladesch, um nur einige zu nennen...

Vielleicht erinnert ihr euch an das Editorial unserer ersten Ausgabe des Readers, die veröffentlicht wurde, kurz nachdem wir im März 2023 den Verlust großer Teile unseres Geliebten Schilfs erlebt hatten. Damals schien uns der Verlust immens und unüberwindbar.

Doch Woche für Woche wuchs das Schilf wieder nach, und es kehrte Leben in das Becken zurück. Während sich der Ort erholte, fand auch unser Verein neue widerstandsfähige Wege, um mit der Situation, mit der wir konfrontiert waren, umzugehen.

Nun, im Mai 2024, gerade als die neue Saison der Floating University beginnt, stehen wir vor einer weiteren existenziellen Krise: Die finanzielle Unterstützung durch öffentliche Mittel, auf die wir ge-

hofft und hingearbeitet haben, ist nicht eingetreten. Die Sterne am Finanzierungshimmel stehen in diesem Jahr offenbar nicht günstig über dem Regenrückhaltebecken und es scheint, als würde die Sternkarte große Veränderungen für alternative Gemeinschaftsprojekte in Berlin ankündigen. Wieder einmal sind wir gezwungen, innezuhalten und umzudenken, neu zu strukturieren und uns andere Möglichkeiten für unser Projekt vorzustellen – wie können wir die Floating über Wasser halten?

Und doch sind unsere Probleme trivial und unbedeutend, wenn man sie in Relation zu der dramatischen Situation setzt, in der sich unsere Welt derzeit befindet. Es ist leicht, die Hoffnung zu verlieren, den Kopf in den Schlamm zu stecken und aufzugeben. Auch wenn sich unsere Arbeit selbst manchmal unbedeutend oder klein anfühlt, hoffen wir insgeheim, dass das Ausruhen am heutigen Tag, die Flucht in märchenhafte Geschichten – mit fabelhaften Kreaturen und spekulativen Welten – uns vielleicht mehr Kraft gibt, um morgen für eine gerechtere und solidarischere Welt zu kämpfen.

Letztendlich finden wir in unserem Zusammenkommen die Motivation, Kraft und auch Freude, die wir dafür brauchen. Wir nutzen die Gelegenheit dieses Readers in die nun vor euch liegenden Seiten auch Andersartigkeit und neue Perspektiven einzuladen.

Vom Schilf haben wir gelernt, dass sich rhizomatische Netzwerke auch von einer drastischen Zerstörung nicht unterkriegen lassen. Wir haben die Hoffnung, dass (Re)Aktion, Fürsorge und Gemeinschaft auch Asche in fruchtbaren Boden verwandeln können.

So wie das Schreiben in verschiedenen Sprachen eine Einheit findet und nicht nur einheitliche Worte. Oder wie lautes Sprechen als Gesang oder leises Sprechen als Gebet Kämpfe in Realitäten verwandeln kann.

– Kleine Strahlen der Hoffnung –
– auf kontaminiertem Boden. –

Mit floatenden Grüßen,
Euer Floating Press Team

Dear readers

This is the second issue of the Reeder, Floating's Community Newspaper. The Reeder is a collection of voices from our extended community, relating in one way or another to the infamous rainwater retention basin in Berlin Kreuzberg which we inhabit since 2018. This issue #02 weaves together myths of Floating's foundation, tales of our ongoing presence on site and speculative legends of the possible futures ahead of us. It is partially true, equally fictional and deliberately incomplete.

In the following pages, you will read about the discovery of a forgotten water infrastructure and it's re-appropriation, field notes about moss companions, hydro-poetry, an arduous quest in search of a sacred fig tree, site-specific cross words, winterly barbecue recipes, a phenological calendar, and voices and impressions from other urban and riparian spaces of resistance across water bodies in São Paulo, Brasil or Dhaka, Bangladesh amongst others...

You might remember reading the editorial to our first edition of the Reeder, published just after having experienced the partial loss of our beloved reeds in March 2023. At this time the loss seemed immense and insurmountable. Yet week after week the reeds grew back and life came back to the basin. While the site started its path for recovery, our association found ways to deal with the new situation we were confronted with, resiliently.

In May 2024, as a new season starts for Floating University we face another existential meltdown: the financial support from the public sector we worked and hoped for did not materialise. The stars did not align in the funding skies above the rainwater retention basin this year. Is the sky chart announcing big changes for alternative community based projects in Berlin? Once again we are forced to pause and rethink, restructure and re-imagine a future for our project – how to keep Floating afloat?

And yet our problems are trivial and insignificant, when put in perspective with the dramatic situation our world is currently in. It is easy to lose hope, to want to put our heads in the mud and give up. And if sometimes our work itself feels helpless or small, we secretly hope that letting ourselves rest today, escaping into fairytale stories - with fabulous creatures and speculative futures - might give us more force to fight for a more just and solidaric world tomorrow. Ultimately, we find the joy and strength needed in being a community. Inviting in those pages otherness and new perspectives. As we learned from the reeds, the rhizomatic network doesn't let itself be beaten even by the most drastic destruction. As hope, (re)action, care and community can turn ashes into fertile soil. As writing in different languages finding unity not uniform words. Speaking loud as a chant or quietly as a prayer can turn battles into realities.

– Small rays of hope on contaminated grounds. –

Floatingly yours, your press team

PAGE	TITLE	TYPE	AUTHOR(S)	LANGUAGE
1+56	Swampscapes	Cover illustration	Stephanie Hardy	–
2–3	Dear Ree(a)ders	Editorial text	Reeder Editorial Team	E+D
4–7	Odyssey	Foundational myth	Sarah Bovelett, David Morsi	E+D
8–9	The Myth of Effetchoi	Story, drawings	Hybrid Gaze, Club de Bridge	E
10–12	A being called Space for Practice	Adventure, drawing	Sabine Zahn, Sophia Tabatadze	E
13	Seeding our Fresh choices	Poem	Fiona Glenn, Nina Hanz	E
14–15	TDD Carr-hot-dogs!	Recipe	TDD (Gülsüm Güler, Inci Güler) and friends	E
16–20	Post Human Moss Tale	(Speculative) Fieldnotes	Fotini Takirdiki	E
12+	Cross-site correspondence	Correspondence	Vida Rucli, Reeder Editorial Team	E
21–22	Die Phänologischen Jahreszeiten	Almanach	Kim Lang	D
23–27	T-labor für feuchte Fragilität	Article, mapping	Sarah Bovelett, Lorenz Kuschnig Lefort	D
28	Climate Care's Avca	Avca (cartoon story)	Max Azemar, Marina Olivares	E
29–30	The Basin of Attentions	Tale	Jade DreYfuss	E
31–32	Korail, City of Culture	Impressions	Garance Maurer, Rosario Talevi	E
33–36	Unsealing Floating	Texts, drawings	Learnscape	E
37	The Basin as Hydrocommons	Text, Images	F. Frankowiak, M.Hindelan, A. Schwarz, E. Valter	E
38–42	Erde, Bäume, Pilze, Wasser	Stories, collage	Kidsuni	E
43	Mots Flex	Game, arrow words	Chloé Horta	E
44–47	Trees of Enlightenment	Quest, Poem	Jöran Mandik	E
48	Frequently Asked Questions	Mystical FAQ	Reeder Editorial Team, AI oracle	E
49–52	Fragments of Waterfronts	Conversations	South Designs	E
53	Post-disciplinary	Dialogue	Benjamin Foerster-Baldenius, Stefan Shankland	E
54	Best of Bar	Charts	Hannah Lu Verse	E
55	Chat on site	Manual	Site Team, Jeanne Astrup-Chauvaux	E



Text: David Morsi und Sarah Bovelett
Zeichnungen: Sarah Bovelett

Es war einmal ein verwunschener See, der sich wie ein funkelnder Edelstein inmitten einer großen, geschäftigen, grauen Stadt versteckte. Nur wenige Menschen kannten ihn, denn er lag tiefer als die Wege, die ihn umgaben und war von einem Dickicht aus Robinien, Götterbäumen, Säulenpappeln, Flatterulmen, Liguster, Brombeeren und Efeu verborgen und ein eisernes, imposantes Tor versperrte den einzigen Zugang. Nur die Amseln und Meisen, die Zaunkönige, die Graureiher und Raben, die Frösche und Kröten, die Enten, die Füchse, die Libellen kannten den Weg zu diesem verborgenen Ort und besuchten ihn häufig.

Doch der See war eigentlich gar kein See und auch wenn er noch so verwunschen und idyllisch in seinem schmalen Tal lag, war er noch nicht lange so märchenhaft. Er barg ein Geheimnis, das nur in Zeiten der Trockenheit ans Tageslicht trat. Wenn die Sonne gnadenlos das Wasser zum Verdunsten brachte, enthüllte der See seine wahre Gestalt: eine öde Landschaft aus grauem Asphalt, die sich trist und leblos erstreckte. Der See war gar kein See, er war nur eine riesige asphaltierte Mulde, die nur durch die Magie des Wassers ihr zauberhaftes Antlitz erhielt. Karten beschrieben den Ort als ein *Regenwasserrückhaltebecken*, eine technische Infrastruktur, die zum Flughafen Tempelhof gehörte. Wasser wurde eingeleitet, kurzzeitig angestaut und wieder weitergeleitet. Wie eine städtische Badewanne - nur dreckig und ohne die Badenden.

Und auch nachdem das letzte Flugzeug auf

dem nahe gelegenen Feld gelandet war, blieb das Becken notwendig für die Ableitung und Anstauung der Himmelstränen und so änderte sich lange Zeit nichts an seinem Zustand. Jahr um Jahr verging, und der See, der eigentlich keiner war, blieb ein stummer Zeuge des städtischen Treibens. Die Wanne geriet in Vergessenheit, das Wasser kam und ging, die Tiere kamen und gingen, nur die grauen Kehrer kamen nicht mehr. Mit dem Wasser wurden Sedimente angespült und sie setzten sich fest. Pflanzen schlugen ihre Wurzeln, ein Schilfgürtel wuchs und die Algen und die Tiere fanden einen Lebensraum.

Die Menschen standen oft vor dem eisernen Tor und rätselten, was bloß dahinter lag. Sie wünschten sich, mal hinter dem Zaun zu sein, dort wo sie die Vögel immer nur beim Kreisen beobachten konnten. Ihre Sehnsucht wurde größer und größer um so enger es im Rest der Stadt nur wurde, und so kam es, dass sich eines Tages, als die Sonne unter dem Horizont versank, eine kleine Gruppe mutiger Seelen auf die lange Reise machte, um den Ort behutsam für die Menschen aus der großen, grauen Stadt zugänglich zu machen und die Mauern der Gleichgültigkeit zu durchbrechen.

Es bedurfte vieler Jahre, bis die kleine Gruppe es tatsächlich schaffte, das Tor öffnen zu dürfen (aber das ist eine andere Geschichte). Sie öffneten das Tor, und gemeinsam mit neugierigen Lernenden und ihren emsigen Lehrenden aus der großen Stadt, aber auch aus vielen anderen Orten, nah und fern, bauten sie

Stege und Brücken und machten den verwunschenen See zu ihrem Campus.

Einige Monate lang besuchten viele Menschen das besondere Becken, zum Lernen und Verlernen, zum Austausch, Experimentieren, zum Dasein. Der seltsame See, mit seinen unvorhersehbaren Wasserständen, all den Lebewesen und Pflanzen wurde zum Spiegel der großen Fragen, mit denen sich die Menschen der großen, grauen Stadt beschäftigten. So kam es, dass als der Sommer sich dem Ende neigte und auch die kleine Reise zum Abschluss kommen sollte, dass gemeinsam der Entschluss gefasst wurde zu bleiben. Die Menschen mit dem Schlüssel waren, mit einigen Bedenken, einverstanden. Aus der kleinen Gruppe war über die Monate hinweg eine große Gruppe geworden. Sie gründeten eine Gemeinschaft und begannen damit, ihre erste gemeinsame Reise zu reflektieren, in einer Symphonie aus Visionen und Träumen – was hatte man gelernt, was wollte man als Nächstes lernen? Wie sollte man weitermachen? Wie sich organisieren? Und überhaupt, wer oder was war man und wollte man sein? Die Gruppe der Menschen, in diesem seltsamen See mit seinem artenreichen Ökosystem und dem Experiment des Lernortes?

Auch das nächste Abenteuer hielt Herausforderungen bereit. Die Menschen mit dem Schlüssel stellten zwar nach wie vor den Schlüssel bereit, doch die unterschiedlichen Sichtweisen auf den seltsamen See konnten nicht weiter voneinander entfernt sein. Es war ein steiniger Weg und manche mögen sagen, einige Steine wurden gewollt platziert, doch trotzdem ging es stetig voran. Die Wertschätzung, die den Reisenden entgegengebracht wurde, bestärkte sie weiterzumachen. Ihre Unterfangen wurden gefördert, es wurden ihnen Auszeichnungen verliehen und selbst eine venezianische goldene Raubkatze schloss sich der Gruppe an. Der seltsame See und die Wagnisse, die sich in und auf diesem Gewässer entwickelten, genossen große Aufmerksamkeit und viele Geschichten über diesen Ort und seine Möglichkeiten, rankten sich auch in weit entfernten Gefilden.

Das befestigte Becken war aus seinem langen Schlaf geweckt worden und mit ihm auch die Menschen, die es nun wieder verwalten, warten und betreiben wollten.

Der seltsame See selbst veränderte sich auch. Der Schilfröhrich wuchs, neben dem Gemeinen Schilf gedieh auch Silberweiden-Aufwuchs, Blutweiderich, Gift-Hahnenfuß, Flohknöterich, ein Exemplar der gefährdeten Sumpf-Dotterblume und auch der Breitblättrige Rohrkolben und die Gewöhnliche Teichsimse fühlten sich außerordentlich wohl im seltsamen See. Auch die Erdkröten und Teichfrösche, die Molche, die Bachstelzen, Buntspechte, Mauersegler und Rotkehlchen, die Schilfjäger, Feuerlibellen und Blaupfeile

waren meist unbeeindruckt von dem ganzen neuen Geschehen, gab es ja genügend Momente in denen sie den seltsamen See für sich alleine hatten.

Es war jedoch zum verrückt werden. Während die eine Obrigkeit sich um die nicht-menschlichen Organismen zu sorgen schien und zu ihrem Schutz mahnte, manifestierte die andere ihre Legitimation, die Funktionsfähigkeit der technischen Infrastruktur zu gewährleisten, mit der logischen Konsequenz entstandene Lebensräume mit Kehrwalzen und Baggerschaufel zu beseitigen. Ein irrwitziges Paradoxon. Die Menschen machten was sie gerne machen, sie erstellten Gutachten, analysierten den Bestand, verschickten Briefe, diskutierten und stritten sich.

So ergab sich die Zeit, in der sich die Menschen hüten sollten, das befremdliche Becken zu betreten. Die gern getragene Fußbekleidung aus synthetischem Kautschuk wurde verborgen und sollte dem Becken von nun an fern bleiben.

Kleine und große Menschen zu Besuch am seltsamen See wünschten sich, das wunderbare Wasser mit Respekt vor dem Lebensraum der anderen Lebewesen teilen zu können und auf diese Acht zu geben und sie nicht zu stören. Doch mussten sie beobachten, wie dieses Recht allein einem großen Fahrzeug mit Schaufel und gigantischen Rädern vorbehalten war. Man erklärte den Menschen, dass ihre Füße bei weitem mehr Zerstörung anrichten würden, als die Schaufeln der Bagger, denn diese würden ja bloß ihre notwendige Aufgabe erfüllen: die Instandhaltung der technischen Infrastruktur, eine Schutzmaßnahme. Die Menschen grubelten und überlegten wie es weitergehen konnte. Nur langsam und widerwillig erkannten sie, dass es dieses Paradoxon unter vielen zu akzeptieren galt.

Und auch während der seltsame See und die Reise auf die sich die Menschen im seltsamen See gemacht hatten wie mit einem Flüstern, einem Murmeln, das wie Löwenzahnsamen vom Wind getragen wurde in Geschichten und Bildern weit über die Region hinaus verbreitet wurde und sogar das junge Zauberhaus der Europäischen Baukunst das Abenteuer lobte und es mit einem Preis bedenken wollten, selbst dann - wurden die hölzernen Stege vor Ort in Frage gestellt. Würde die Küche bei Windstößen nicht wegfliegen? Der wirre Widerspruch unterschiedlicher Auffassungen stellte die Abenteuerer und ihr Unterfangen erneut auf die Probe. Die Herausforderungen und Steine im Wege dieses widerspenstigen kleinen Wagnis in der verrückten Wanne brachten auch Streitigkeiten innerhalb der Gruppe der mutigen Seelen hervor und drohten das Vorhaben zu zerbrechen. Sie hielten jedoch fest zusammen, vereint durch die Kraft des zauberhaften Ortes, den sie kennen und lieben gelernt hatten. Sie begannen sich vermehrt auszutauschen und zu vernetzen und versuchten auch, die ihnen fremden Perspektiven zu hören und zu verstehen.

Jahre zogen ins Land, bis sich folgendes ereignete. Tief in den verwinkelten Gassen der Hauptstadt, wo die Schatten der Vergangen-

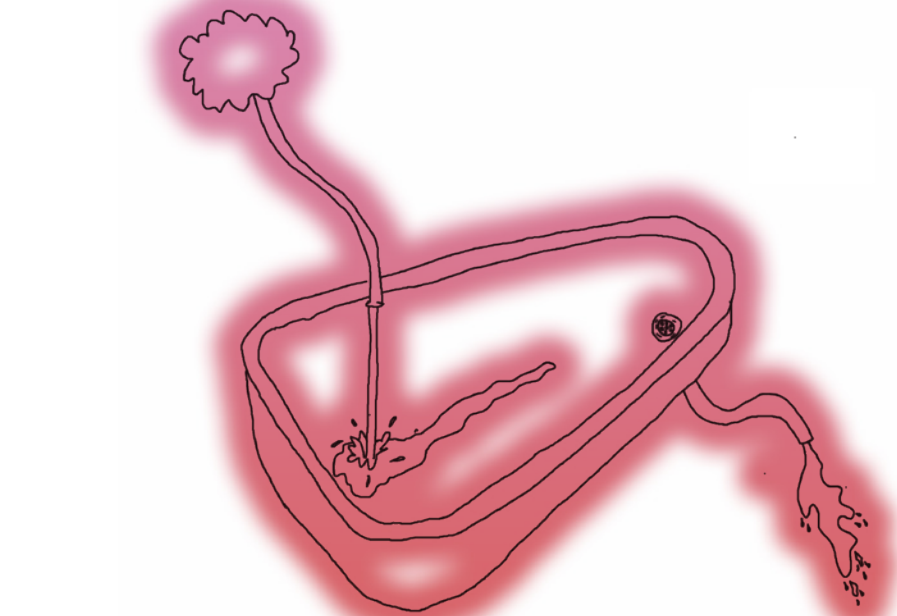
heit mit dem Licht der Gegenwart verschmolzen, wurden die Menschen in den ehrwürdigen Gebäuden der Verwaltung aufmerksam. Auch sie hörten das Flüstern von den Wänden ihrer Hallen und verstanden es, in den Unterfangen der Widerspenstigen eine leuchtende Strahlkraft und das Potenzial eines hell leuchtenden Turmes in einem dunklen Meer aus Ungewissheit zu entdecken. Man befahl den Streitenden, sich zu einigen und alte Konflikte hinter sich zu lassen.

Es wurde eingeladen an eine lange Tafel, geschmückt mit Blumen aus den Gärten der Stadt, deren bunte Blüten den Duft von Versöhnung und Einigkeit verströmten. An dieser Tafel versammelten sich die einst Streitenden. Ihre Gesichter spiegelten eine Mischung aus Ehrfurcht und Hoffnung wider, als sie sich gegenüber saßen, bereit, eine neue Ära des Friedens und der Zusammenarbeit einzuläuten, und sie besiegelten ihre neuen, gemeinsamen Absichten in einer bahnbrechenden und wegbereitenden Manifestation.

Hat die Odyssee der widerspenstigen Reisenden nun ihr Ende gefunden? Sind die so verschiedenen Perspektiven auf den bezaubernden Naturkultur-Lernort, das schützenswerte Biotop¹ und die technische Infrastruktur nun wirklich ein für alle mal in der Perspektive einer gleichberechtigten hybriden Infrastruktur vereint? Kann dies in Zukunft doch noch alles auf einem fabelhaften Fußballplatz vereint werden, müssen aus urbanen Platzmangel doch Menschen hier herziehen oder bleibt das besondere Becken essentiell? All das ist märchenhafte Zukunftsmusik. Doch eins ist gewiss: die Menschen vor Ort haben angekündigt, widerspenstig, kooperationsbereit und hoffnungsvoll bleiben zu wollen. So lebten sie glücklich und zufrieden bis an ihr Lebensende.

Und so, liebe Readers, wollen wir uns an die Geschichte des seltsamen Sees erinnern, denn sie ist eine Geschichte von Hoffnung und Möglichkeit, von Träumen, die von den Händen der Verwegenen und den Herzen der Träumenden in die Realität gewoben wurden.

1 Anmerkung der Redaktion: Wir müssen an dieser Stelle darauf hinweisen, dass es sich nicht um ein Geschütztes Biotop handelt, sondern ein schützenswertes. Das könnte laut § 635 Abs. 1 Nr. 3 und § 7 Abs. 2 Nr. 14 unter Umständen dasselbe bedeuten. Die entsprechenden Auswirkungen können sich jedoch Grundsätzlich unterscheiden. Schützenswerte Biotop darf man unter Umständen zu bestimmten Zeiten auch nicht schützen.



David Morsl und Sarah Govelett sind Mitglieder des Floating e.V. Sie sind Teil einer Arbeitsgruppe, die sich weitgehend damit beschäftigt, dafür zu sorgen, dass die Floating weiterhin bestehen kann. Das bedeutet kontinuierlich mit den unterschiedlichen Behörden im Austausch zu sein, Genehmigungen zu beantragen, auf Antworten oder Termine zu warten – und Probleme zu lösen. Diese Odyssee beschreibt einige der Abenteuer mit ihren Höhen und Tiefen, die sich in den letzten mindestens sechs Jahren ereignet haben.

Once upon a time there was an enchanted lake, hidden like a sparkling gem in the middle of a large, bustling, grey city. Few knew of its existence, for it lay deeper than the paths that surrounded it and it remained concealed by a thicket of locust trees, trees of the gods, poplars, wych elms, privet, brambles and ivy, and an imposing iron gate blocked the only entrance. Only the blackbirds and wrens, grey herons and ravens, frogs and toads, ducks, foxes and dragonflies knew the way to this hidden place and visited it frequently.

But the lake was no ordinary body of water, and even though it lay enchanted and idyllic in its narrow valley, it had not been so magical for long. It held a secret that only came to light in times of drought. When the sun mercilessly caused the water to evaporate, the lake revealed its true form: a barren landscape of grey asphalt that stretched out drearily and lifelessly. The lake wasn't a lake at all, it was just a huge asphalted hollow that was only given its enchanting appearance by the magic of the water. Maps described the place as a rainwater retention basin, a technical infrastructure part of the Tempelhof Airport. Water was let in, retained for a short time and then released again. Like an urban bathtub – only dirty and without the bathers.

And even after the last plane had landed on the air field nearby, the basin remained necessary for the drainage and accumulation of the sky's tears and so nothing changed in its condition for a long time. Year after year passed and the lake, which was not really a lake, remained a silent witness to the hustle and bustle of the town. The tub fell into oblivion, the water came and went, the animals came and went, only the grey sweepers stopped sweeping. Sediments were washed up with the water and settled. Plants took root, a belt of reeds grew and the algae and animals found a habitat.

People often stood in front of the iron gate and wondered what lay behind it. They wished to be behind the fence, where they could only ever watch the birds circling. Their longing grew bigger and bigger the more crowded the rest of the city became, and so one day, as the sun sank below the horizon, a small group of brave souls fueled by curiosity and a longing for something more, embarked on a journey to carefully make the place accessible to people from the big, grey city and break through the walls of indifference.

It took many years before the small group actually managed to open the gate (but that's another story). They opened the gate, and together with curious learners and their eager teachers from the big city, but also from many other places, near and far,

they built footbridges and walkways and turned the enchanted lake into their campus.

For several months, many people visited the special basin to learn and unlearn, to exchange ideas, to experiment, to be. The strange lake, with its unpredictable water levels, all the creatures and plants, became a mirror of the big questions that the people of the big, grey city were dealing with. As the summer drew to a close and the little journey was supposed to come to an end, the decision was made to stay. The people with the key agreed, with some reservations. Over the months, the small group had become a large group. They formed an association and began to reflect on their first journey together, in a symphony of visions and dreams – what had they learned, what did they want to learn next? How should they continue? How to organize themselves? And anyway, who or what were they and what did they want to be? A group of people in a strange lake with a species-rich ecosystem and an experiment of a site of learning?

The next adventure also held challenges. The people with the key still provided the key, but the different views of the strange lake could not have been further apart. It was a rocky road and some might say some stones were deliberately placed, but still the progress was steady. The appreciation shown to the travelers encouraged them to continue. Their ventures were encouraged, awards were given to them and even a Venetian Golden Cat of Prey joined the group. The strange lake and the ventures that developed in and on its waters attracted a great deal of attention and many stories about this place and its possibilities spread to distant lands.

The fortified basin had been awakened from its long sleep and with it the people who now wanted to manage, maintain and operate it again.

The strange lake itself also changed. The reedbeds grew, silver willow, purple loosestrife, poison buttercup, fleabane, a specimen of the endangered marsh marigold and the broad-leaved bulrush and common pond sedge also thrived in the strange lake. The common toads and pond frogs, newts, waterhairs, great spotted woodpeckers, swifts and robins, reed warblers, fire dragonflies and blue darters were mostly unimpressed by all the new happenings, as there were plenty of moments when they had the strange lake to themselves.

However, it was maddening. While one authority seemed to be concerned about the non-human organisms and called for their protection, the other manifested its legitimacy in ensuring the functionality of the technical infrastructure, with the logical consequence of removing the resulting habitats with sweepers and excavator shovels. A strange paradox. The humans did what they like to do, they drew up expert reports, analyzed the existing situation, sent letters, discussed and argued.

This was the time when people should be careful not to wander too far into the strange lake. The popular synthetic rubber footwear was concealed and was to be kept out of the basin from now on.

People young and old visiting the strange lake wished to be able to share the wonderful water with respect for the habitat of the other creatures and to take care not to disturb them. But they had to observe how this right was reserved solely for a large vehicle with a shovel and gigantic wheels. It was explained to the people that their feet would cause far more destruction than the shovels of the excavators, as these would only fulfill their necessary task: the maintenance of the technical infrastructure, a protective measure. The people pondered and thought about how to proceed. Only slowly and reluctantly did they realize that this paradox was one of many to be accepted.

And even though the strange lake and the journey that the people in the strange lake had embarked on was spread far beyond the region in stories and pictures as if with a whisper, a murmur carried on the wind like dandelion seeds, and even the young Enchanted House of European Architecture praised the adventure and wanted to award it a prize, even then – the wooden walkways on site were questioned. Wouldn't the kitchen blow away in gusts of wind? The confused contradiction of differing opinions put the adventurers and their venture to the test once again. The challenges and stones in the way of this unruly little venture in the weird basin also caused disputes within the group of brave souls and threatened to break up the project. However, they stuck together, united by the power of the magical place they had come to know and love. They began to exchange and network more and more and also tried to listen to and understand the perspectives of others.

Years passed before the following happened. Deep in the winding alleyways of the capital, where the shadows of the past merged with the light of the present, the people in the venerable buildings of the administration took notice. They, too, heard the whispers from the walls of their halls and understood how to detect a shining radiance and the potential of a brightly shining tower in a dark sea of uncertainty in the ventures of the rebellious. The disputants were ordered to come to an agreement and put old conflicts behind them.

They were invited to a long table, decorated with flowers from the city's gardens, whose colorful blossoms exuded the scent of reconciliation and unity. The once quarrelling parties gathered at this table. Their faces reflected a mixture of awe and hope as they sat across from each other, ready to usher in a new era of peace and cooperation, and they sealed their new, shared intentions in a groundbreaking and pioneering manifestation.

Has the odyssey of the unruly travelers now come to an end? Are the so different perspectives on the enchanting natureculture learning site, the biotope¹ worthy of protection and the technical infrastructure now really united once and for all in the perspective of an equal hybrid infrastructure? Can all this still be united on a fabulous soccer pitch in the future, will people have to move here due to a lack of urban space or will this special basin remain essential? All of this is a fairytale dream of the future. But one thing is certain: the brave souls have announced their intention to remain unruly, cooperative and hopeful.

And so, dear Readers, let us remember the tale of the enchanted lake – a story of resilience, cooperation, hope and possibility, of dreams woven into reality by the hands of the daring and the hearts of the dreamers. For in the midst of even the busiest city lies the potential for magic, waiting to be discovered by those brave enough to listen to its whispers. And they lived happily ever after.

1 Editor's note: We must point out at this point that this is not a protected biotope, but a biotope worthy of protection. According to § 635 Para. 1 No. 3 and § 7 Para. 2 No. 14, this could possibly mean the same thing. However, the corresponding effects may differ in principle. Biotopes worthy of protection may not be protected at certain times.

The Myth of Effetchci

Hybrid Gaze



The Floating Hybrid Creature is a multi-headed, poly-tentacular thing with many living and non-living parts. From a distance it's hard to make out its outline. It has an uncanny look and feel. When you get close enough, you can sense its energy - specific, intriguing, and its cool, swampy breath surrounding you. Some parts are hard; like concrete and asphalt, cracking open with age; like wood, becoming slippery with rain; like metal, forming joints and limbs. Other parts are soft; like water, coming and going and staying awhile; like mud, accumulating and becoming soil; like reeds, growing in place and swaying in the breeze. It is always changing along with weather, circadian rhythms and socio-cultural activity. It is made of worlds within worlds, spanning many scales and temporalities.

It is impure and contaminated - a toxic body, that is incurable and that is cherished. And yet it provides sustenance and is full of life. It is moving slowly and carefully while witnessing frenzies. It is animate and yet it is still. It is symbiotic - an entangled body, where the different parts are exchanging resources and helping each other thrive. It is habitat.

It is flexible, permeable and porous enough to welcome change and weather adversity. It also is connected to living and non-living entities near and far. It is hosting, holding, heartening; guarding, giving, governing; caring, composting, cradling. It is sowing and it is harvesting. It is self-aware and (re-)producing. It is happily ageing, rotting and decaying. It is never starting from scratch but always re-made. It is hopeful without certainty. To really understand, you must enter and nestle in its boundary layer, where moisture, gases, rot and renewal coexist. You must listen to its voice made of scaffolds clangs and crows caws, you must pay attention to its watery whispers, to the constant leakage, to the slow, steady cracking of its asphalt skin. It's name is Effetchci.

Effetchci is the Floating Hybrid Creature. It was outlined by the Hybrid Gaze and inspired by talks and readings from Climate Care Festival and especially by a discussion and workshop with Club de Bridge. The short creature descriptions (time creature, wise creature, bastard creature, techno-creature, open creature etc.) were written by Club de Bridge and meant as short Prompts that initiated a reflection on Floating University as a hybrid assemblage of concepts, smells, materials and potential futures.

The Hybrid Gaze was an observation group attending Climate Care festival 2023 "Citterkratia!" as observers, learning from the festival for the association and for the floating site. (to gaze: to look steadily, intently. Gaze: a group of raccoons.) The Hybrid Gaze consists of Fotini Takirdiki, Jeanne Astrup-Chauvaux, Jöran Mandik, Garance Maurer and Katherine Ball the creatures were made with the guidance of Club de Bridge.

THE WISE CREATURE



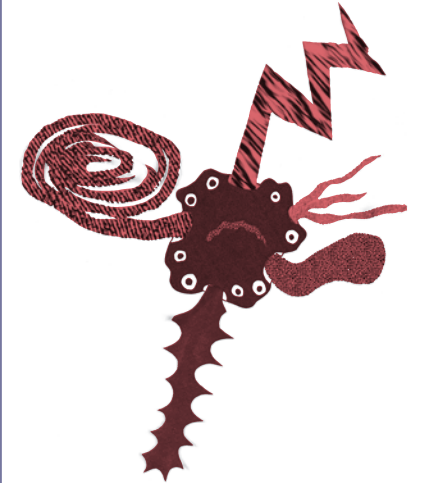
This creature likes to hybridize itself by swallowing different knowledge. The body of the creature then could be a place for debate, a place where arguments can be confronted and discussed, as it is often the case in Floating. This creature would then sum up the knowledge but also transmit it to others by its own creative means.

THE TIME CREATURE



This creature could be a visualization of the time passing by. Often in mythologies, there are creatures representing the cycle of the seasons. Since Floating is changing a lot throughout the year, it could be interesting to think about a creature that represents this perpetual change.

THE OPEN CREATURE



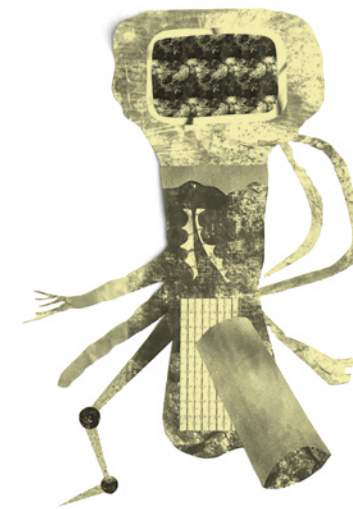
Could you think of a creature that represents the convergence and the hybridization of the different cultures, species, social categories present in Floating? How could you represent a being merging all these singularities? How would it come together?

THE BASTARD CREATURE



This hybrid creature would be a representation of how hybridity can sometimes be seen as a threat to purity. This creature could be shaped by the conservative idea that mixing things together only diminish, dirty, lessen the allegedly power of the essence. How could this bastard creature show that hybridization is a power that can threatened the conservative forces?

THE TECHNO CREATURE



This creature hybridizes through technologies: it integrates random technologies that allows it to change its behaviours, its ways of moving, its cerebral abilities... Some of the technologies go together and create new skills for the creatures, but other technologies it collects are in conflict and turn the creature into an ineffective being, lessening all its capacities.

THE CREATURE OF BELIEFS



This creature exists to make sense out of unexplainable phenomenon. It syncretizes all the "pagan" beliefs into its body and thus, give a universal and "tangible" explanation to reality. This creature could be at the root of a Floating religion.

A being

called

space

for

practice

Sabine Zahn

Text: Sabine Zahn
Graphic Recording: Sophia Tabatadze

Space for Practice appeared between August 2022 and July 2023, every Wednesday morning at 9 a.m., hibernating between January and March. It expanded and shrunk in the two hours of its weekly existence. While doing so, it accommodated many organisms. It trained to be resistant and flexible to the ever-so-many irregular conditions, never quite sure if what it had learned one Wednesday would be applicable to the next one too. *Lean into your practice!*¹

In the following text, I will take you through some of what stays with me. I set up Space for Practice to cherish practising as a way of nurturing choreographers and their *workways*², a potential choreographic side of Floating and the people who want to move with the city, the weather, a place. However, trying to grasp the layers of this practising, it tends to escape description. Maybe it helps to look at it like an animal. What was it busy with?

1 Paula Kramer: See the formation of the trees, they tilt in varied ways, we'll stay in here with them tilting.
2 Fragments of instructions of some choreographers will appear throughout this text. Each second session was led by a different choreographer proposing movements what they were busy with in their work.

SOME MINUTES BEFORE 9 AM. In Berlin, for many people involved in culture and dance, this is early! I enter the site, usually alone, sometimes with the one and only other overly punctual practitioner waiting in front of the metal gate. I register the tone of this particular morning; the way my feet sound on the scaffolding planks and how this punctuates all the other sounding entities that embrace me immediately, embrace me like the air, like the light, like the temperatures. The temperature is always different behind the gate than just in front of it. The opening up of space (for practice) starts with entering the rainwater retention basin through this gate. The mathematic regularity of the Wednesday mornings across a whole year is like a pin on a map around which something can happen. So I enter. I tune into how clouds, sun and sky resonate with the air on the ground, that flows between leaves and branches, between my skin and the metal structures of Floating, today and now, starting on a Wednesday morning.

IN THE 10 MINUTES BEFORE WE REALLY START, people enter like different species of birds, aligning and settling loosely around, both away from and close to each other; remote yet present. I assume everyone registers some of the tones of this morning, the various types of echoes it produces with oneself. Space for registering.

If Space for Practice were an animal, it could speak in words. One phrase it repeated often was, "I've made it." I guess it wanted to say, "I've made it to come to this place, in this weather, despite many reasons not to do so." A little relief, a little pride and a subtle delicious joy. Happy to exist and be here despite many reasons not to. In fact it might have intended to say, "We are here, we made it, at this time in the morning, in this place and in this weather" (Curiously any weather condition contributes to this rather impish pride; be it a bright fresh blue sky or a cold grey winter breeze). So we are here, with this weather, on this morning and that by itself is an act. It is something we can do. *I remember we made the sun appear from the clouds.*¹

Sometimes I can feel torn between a situation proposed and what I already share with the site. How many

1 Ghyslaine Gau, recalling a moment of her work on kidneys, that involved moving hands towards a cloudy winter sky.
2 Instruction by Hanna Schillinger
3 Hanna Schillinger

layers of this place and its situations can my bodyself actually carry? And how to carry (out) at the same time a practice proposed by a colleague and respond to the multiple layers of the place I know so well?

A tracing exercise in a warm spring day. I *follow the calling*² that leads me in and out of knees, swirling arms, twisting backs, of chalk lines on asphalt, patterns of lines where the asphalt had been sealed, slightly elevated like healed scars, leading me to the tiny mounds of dust that once was soil, covering the whole basin. I follow the traces inscribed in these dusty leftovers. I see tyre marks, massive ones. My body would easily fit into them. The dust seems to be here only to make the marks appear and tell their story; the story of a mechanical clearing that happened just some weeks ago. Following traces through my movements, I end up alone, away in the wooded slopes of the basin. In front of me the heap of now dead trunks of willow trees, that had been exactly as old as Floating, growing in the 5 years we have been present here. I am struck numb, my body clueless, nothing to say, nothing to move. If Space for Practice were an animal that I moved with, I would have fallen off its galloping back, out of its momentum and crashed into the thorny undergrowth. I crashed into the political space, into warring interests and the invisible and visible inscriptions of power. As I crawl out, *I am traced by the space while tracing it*,³ as if my skin had been scratched by it. I have to make an effort to get back into moving with the others. The animal called Space for Practice is breathing a little slower now, as if licking and digesting the traces it received.

How to make it work? How do I negotiate my own practising and knowing in the midst of the others, the particular situation evolving of each Wednesday morning? I am also here for encounters. To be with people through practices and to be with practices through people. I know some of them, yet none of them through this place. To provide a chance for meeting, for multiple meetings with multiple beings... To meet, to find, to encounter, to pass, to join, to be, to cross, to cross in flight...

WE ARE PRACTISING IN TRIOS, SCATTERED AROUND THE SITE. Not on the concrete, it is forbidden. Not on the slopes, that is forbidden too. We are only allowed to move on the built structures, such as the platforms. These are the rules from the district administration in 2022. This is the score that everyone has to perform. This Wednesday morning in August we share the platforms with students, artists and the organizers of a festival. All busy, walking back and forth, carrying tools, coffees, phones, looking for others, looking for chairs, looking for silent corners. As Floating fills with people, it fills with agencies and urgencies. It fills with proximities too, most of them unavoidable. Space for Practice is in full motion this morning. We engage in what I and some colleagues have come to call *tenseg- rity*⁴ - a holding and pushing simultaneously through hands and arms with others, connecting and dis- connecting quickly in the flow. Buckminster Fuller coined the term and we are testing it in movement. As it starts to swirl us around each other, we grab whatever we can get hold of, extending in accelera- tion, an expanding crazy ballet of sidestepping and bypassing people, plants, crates of beers, chairs, tables, poles, wooden walls. If Space for Practice were an animal, it is an ecstatically joyous, adrena- lin-driven, hyperspeedy spider on a rollercoaster weaving mission. It weaves everyone in, also the central administrator of the Senate of Urban Development Berlin, here for a business meet- ing. Nobody can circumvent the rule to stay on the platforms, so no body can circumvent the proximity and movements of others. *Stay on the platforms*⁵ and expand *proximities*!⁶

As I am inviting, holding, hosting and wit- nessing this ever-changing animal from within, I wonder about its ever-changing nature. How does it manage to emerge within this ev- er-changing habitat? Between each Wednesday and the next seems like centuries! And I guess it might be like that between the participants, their motivations, backgrounds and knowl- edges. How to make it work? As I try to hold it as subtly and little as possible, I continue to be surprised about the vitality of this being. Or rather a whole expanding family, a little tribe of weird and fragile yet surprisingly resilient creatures, little spaces for practic- es. Maybe the practice of practising itself became what it was most busy with. Each body holding it, each practitioner navigat- ing each time anew, what it takes to engage with and within irregular conditions; the weather, the site and its activities, the un- known others, new and old rules, unpre- dictable proposals and if we were lucky, the other animals that could appear. *Fall into your back.*⁷ *We will grasp and howl.*⁸ *Lean into your practice.*⁹

4 From the "Into Dwelling" Project by Sabine Zahn
5 Score by the Umweltamt des
Bezirksamtes Friedrichshain Kreuzberg
6 Sabine Zahn
7 Siqal Zouk
8 Maija Hirvaninen
9 Paula Kramer

Space for Practice continues in 2024, every Monday 9-11am until July 15. It will be lead and facilitated by Ghyslaine Gau, Lea Martini and Sabine Zahn in rotating shifts. More info on our website.

Thanks to everyone who carried this with me. Everyone who was up early and brave enough to come, my colleagues who sent their colleagues and came regularly, the choreographers who jumped into irregularity, the communication team that made it visible, the lobby team to organize money and Sophia, for staying close to observe and reporting through her Pencil.

1/5, Berlin, 07.02.2024

Dear Vida,
Starting this correspondence, I am writing in the name of Floating eV, as a member of the Reeder editorial team, and —of course, as myself. And I am writing to you, who will maybe answer “in the name of” Robida, your own collective nesting in the heart of the mountains in Topolò.

In french, someone speaking on behalf of someone else is named a “porte-parole”, literally it means bearing, carrying the voice of someone else. So I wonder, how heavy is the load of speaking for others?

Robida is also the name of the situated magazine you publish as a collective. I am interested in this situatedness: "which in its simplest sense can mean that the place where we imagine, work on and produce the magazine enters in it, influences and shapes it" (I'm simply quoting Robi- da's website here).

What does it mean to you, to pub- lish collectively? And how to remain situated, while inviting writers who have never been to Topolò to write for Robida?

Warmly, Jeanne

continues on p.16

Seed our fresh choices (still a life) using peaches)

What came first, the pudding or the fish?

A luck sprung up

It comes around, still, the hollow trunk

*Thickness of being held,
of accumulated time*

*A small bruise of
contact*

Beige-blue is your shadow

*Legs mixed up with stone
waters fed, feed
the changing light
A blushing swamp*

Strangely birdless for a mudlark bowl

*Trapping bone, trapping wing,
trapping air, holding grass*

We are! We were! We will be!

Spreading just to match the form

That's just our cheeky mysticism

*Gill, bark, splinter, tales
(get go sink sing)
lost in the tall grass*

Soil, I contain all, even your steps are mine

Filamental monuments

Illusionary lifts.

Breeze-blown meaning drifts on tides

*So small is my sorrow
so large is your plight*

Skin takes a minute

*Moment more marrow
moan melt moss*

*Horizon lines
that hold*

Waters feed the changing light

*Meaning drifts on tide
merging in, we know*

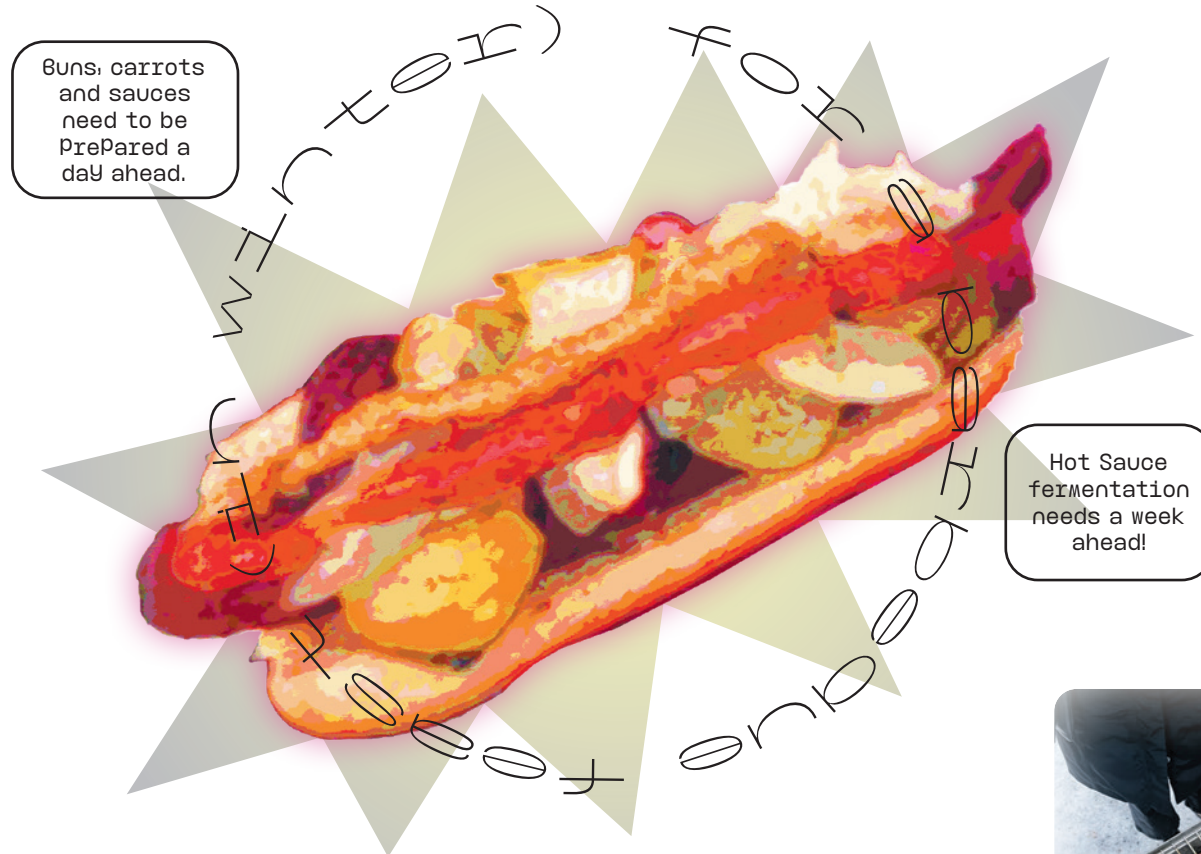
This beetle-born breath

And were you sad, when you became two?

This Poem was written collectively by the Participants of the Spring Poetry workshop facilitated by **Fiona Glen** and **Nina Hanz** at Floating University on August 20th, 2023: GethanY, Bertie, Mathilde, Paolo, PraviK, Lieh, Lina, Luna, Anna, Lina, Giselle, Claire, Katie, Martha, Nora, Fiona, and Nina. Each writer res- ponded to floating's environment, then shared 'sPores' - fragments of Poems - and continued to write, composing a Poem together from each other's sensations and associations. The sub- title is Quoted from ecoPoet Elizabeth-Jane Burnett's 'Little Peach'.

TDD's Carr-hot-dogs!

RECIPE FOR 20 PEOPLE FROM TDD FEATURING MUSTARD & HOT SAUCE BY JASMINE PARSLEY AND BUNS BY MELINA MATZANKÉ



Sour dough Buns

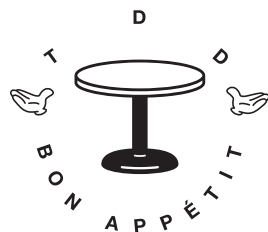
20 BUNS

- 940 g wheat flour
- 100 g sugar
- 16 g salt
- 600 g vegetable milk
- 140 g margarine, cut into small Pieces
- 200 g wheat sourdough

Mix the vegetable milk with the active wheat sourdough in a bowl. Add the flour, sugar and salt and knead well for approx. 5 minutes. Add cold margarine and knead for a further 5 minutes. Leave to rest for 2 hours at room temperature and then covered in the fridge overnight. The next day, remove the dough from the fridge and divide into 20 equal Portions (100 g each). Shape the dough Pieces into small rectangles and roll them up from top to bottom into an long shape. Press the dough together at the ends and on the bottom and place on baking paper, leaving approx. 1 cm space between the buns. Leave to rest for 3 hours at room temperature. Preheat the oven to 210°. Brush the buns with some milk and bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown.



Photography: GÜLSÜM GÜLER



TDD is a nomadic dinner club community founded in 2007 by GÜLSÜM GÜLER & İNCİ GÜLER. The Gatherings mostly take place in temporarily used architecture, where a shared restaurant atmosphere is created. The Team members are artists working in the field of Photography, education, Graphic design and fine arts - with a Passion for food, Public and interdisciplinary dialogue, collaborative work and community building. Bon Appétit! / www.tddb109.com



Carrots

- 20 carrots, skin Peeled off, keep 1cm of the Green stalk
- 3 tbsP cumin
- 3 tbsP Paprika Powder
- 3 tbsP curcuma
- 2 tbsP salt
- 1 tbsP Pepper
- 200 ml Pomegranate molasses
- 4 tbsP soy sauce
- 4 tbsP maple syrup

Boil the carrots for about 10 minutes in salted water. Meanwhile Prepare the marinade in a container where all the carrots fit in: Mix all ingredients - besides the carrots - well. Drain carrots and lay them in the marinade for at least 5 h. Turn occasionally. Keep the lid open till they cooled down, then close the lid and store the carrots in the fridge until the fire is ready!



To assemble TDDs Carr-Hot Dogs, cut the buns open and serve the carr-hot dogs with all the toppings!

Mustard

- 1 onion, diced
- olive oil
- 1 handful shitake mushrooms
- salt
- Pepper
- 100 g Yellow Mustard seeds
- 100 g brown Mustard seeds
- apple cider vinegar
- honey or maple syrup

Sauté one onion in a generous amount of olive oil or butter. Add a hand full of shitake mushrooms & salt & Pepper to the Pan until fully cooked and browned on the outside. Mix in blender. Add one full bag of Yellow Mustard seeds (ca. 100 g) & brown Mustard seeds (these are spicier so add to taste) with apple cider vinegar & 1-2 tablespoons of sweetener (honey or maple syrup) to the blender as well as apple cider vinegar to achieve the desired consistency. Give it a short blend until mixed but the seeds are not completely blended into a smooth Paste - we want some texture here. Let rest at least 12-24 hours before enjoying.

Cole Slaw

- 1 small white cabbage
- 2.5tbsP salt
- Pepper
- 100ml white wine vinegar
- olive oil

Remove the stalk from the cabbage and slice the cabbage into very fine shreds. Mix well with salt, vinegar and Pepper. In the end put some olive oil on the slaw and mix again. Let the slaw come together for about 1 h or the day ahead. Store covered in the fridge.

Toppings

FROM THE MARKET/GROCERY STORE

- 1-2 Packages of fried onions
- Mixed Pickles like salty cucumbers, thinly sliced

Hot sauce

- spicy Peppers
- Pink Peppercorns
- cardamom seeds
- coriander seeds
- salt
- seasonal fruits
- sugar
- apple cider vinegar

Take an assortment of spicy Peppers and wash them. Take a jar and weigh, set the scale to zero, fill with lukewarm water, Peppers, and your favorite Pickling spices (Pink Peppercorns, cardamom, coriander seeds, etc) and weigh the filled up jar. Add 2-3% salt for weight and dissolve the salt. Let sit for 1 week.

Take whatever fruit is in season, cut into big Pieces and add to a Pot with about the same amount of sugar as fruit (if you are scared of sugar you can add a little less) to make a marmalade.

Add marmalade to blender with the Peppers (add until you have a spice level that you like), some of the fermentation water, and apple cider vinegar. Mix as much of the water & vinegar until you have the consistency you want, bottle and enjoy!

bon appétit!



Dear Jeanne,

When in your previous email I read *porte-parole*, someone who carries the voice or the word of a bigger group, I immediately thought of *porte* not as the verb to *carry* but in its substantive meaning: *porte* as the door. I thought of us not as only being the holders of a collective voice, but also, at the same time, as being the doors through which to encounter this collective voice. In your case you are the door to the basin, while I am for you the door to Topolò. And maybe, while thinking of yourself as the door to something, rather than the carrier of someone's voice, the load that you speak of in your previous email becomes immediately lighter. You don't need to represent the collective, carrying the multiplicity of voices on your shoulder, but you can just be an opening to this multiplicity which maybe doesn't lead to understand or encounter the whole complexity of *the* place - the basin in your case - but only leads to a fragment of it. Maybe it's just a door that opens in between the reeds, accompanying me to know their story. Or maybe it's only a door on the world of the birds that nest at Floating or on the sauna that you use from time to time. What I want to say is that the door can open to something partial, without the need of encountering and understanding the totality, to which maybe other doors can lead to.

This reflection on the partiality of the view, and on the position of the viewer towards what is seen from that door, leads me to the question you opened up in your email.

Why to call our publication, Robida, a situated magazine? Of course we borrowed the term “situated” from the long article by Donna Haraway “Situated Knowledges: the Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective” (1988). The term then made us reflect upon the concrete and everyday partial perspective we have while living and working from Topolò, a mountain village of 25 people on the border between Italy and Slovenia, where some of the members of our collective live. Our situated magazine is held, hosted, supported and informed by this specific place and the view we have to the world from here, which doesn't necessarily mean that the content of our publication speaks about this locality. It is maybe situated because its reason to be is deeply grounded in our specific context. It is maybe situated because the cyclical change of seasons, which we are immersed in, impacts how we work, how we stay together, what we think about. We live here porously and are constantly transformed by others, by friends who visit us, by the weather, by the forest. The village and its landscape host our walks during the pauses while designing the magazine and from the walks we bring back traces that graphically enter the magazine and our memories. Its changing seasons give rhythm to our work – summer: the fullness we generate, winter: the emptiness we desire – the heavy rains and storms affect electricity lines and we are left without light for half a day or sometimes even for entire days.

Is all this visible at the end? Sometimes I doubt it and strive for a much clearer visual recognition of this situatedness, of this partiality of the view, of the two hills that draw our horizon from which we dream the world.

How to make the site enter the publication, how to let it speak and through which channels? Can we be not carriers of the voice of the site, but doors through which it can speak its own language? And how to avoid representation? — I know that usually you make these reflections in relation to the politics of the basin, but can similar thoughts be done, more humbly, also within a publication?

Sorry for the long email
looking forward to hearing from you soon
hugs from Topolò
Vida

continues on p.33

Fotini Takirdiki



Fotini Takirdiki is a researcher and Practitioner exploring human-environment relations in the context of the Anthropocene. She holds degrees in Economics and Communication in Societal and Economic Contexts from the University of the Arts Berlin, which she has applied in diverse fields including a digital consultancy, a research institute and the open exhibition laboratory STATE Studio Berlin. Currently, she traverses the fluid landscapes of Floating University Berlin. Pursuing her doctoral studies at the Institute for European Ethnology, Humboldt University of Berlin. Her research interests encompass critical Pedagogy, urban ecology, (un-)inhabitability, swamps and transdisciplinary methods bridging art and science.

Not far from Floating, just down Lilienthalstraße transforming into Grimmstraße at Admiralsbrücke in Berlin-Kreuzberg, I stumble upon a wooden bench installation called “CityTree” with an integrated moss filter and an attached screen with environmental statistics displayed on it. This urban intervention by the start-up Greencity Solutions functions as both a noise detector and an air purifier. The “CityTree” claims to bind 82% of fine dust and cool the air up to 4°C, while a light system signals excessive noise pollution. However, it tends to overlook the living nature of moss, reducing it to a technocratic tool. Along the slogan “We Grow Fresh Air” this ‘green city solution’ reflects eco-surveillant aspirations that put humans at center stage, presenting urban nature through digitally mediated environments rather than embracing the flora, fauna, and habitats of the city (Moss et al., 2021). Before entering the Floating spheres, I take this little detour to observe how moss is treated in the city. Moss as an overlooked weedy life form and managed urban vegetation is entangled in profitable exchanges within urban contexts of sealed surfaces, polluted places and exhausted environments (Gabrys, 2012). Media scholar Jennifer Gabrys proposes a “moss-eye view” to foster different modes of living together and new understandings of urban embodiments within more-than-human processes (Gabrys, 2023, p. 2926). From this moss-eye view I trace: How can we create more-than-human communities and cohabitation with moss at Floating?

Returning from Admiralsbrücke to Floating, I ask what moss actually is. The etymology of the word “moss” reveals its Old English origins in “mos” (bog, marsh) with Germanic roots from the Proto-Germanic word “musan” (marsh, moss) (Etymonline, n.d.). Moss, one of the oldest land plants, has an ancient lineage and a long evolutionary history, dating back 300 million years. It can be found all over the world, especially in areas with high humidity like forests or moors, but it also bears extreme drought, intense sunlight or low light incidence and grows in the most inhospitable places. Despite thriving in diverse environments, many moss species are endangered, emphasizing their sensitivity to environmental changes. Moss lacks roots, absorbing nutrients and water through its entire surface, making it a bioindicator for air and water quality. Mosses are dependent on moisture, they accumulate and store water, they improve air quality by absorbing and filtering matter from the air, and they serve as a micro-habitat for small invertebrates. Mosses are like little sponges that metabolize pollutants. In many ways, one could say that Floating aims to be like moss.

The following moss tales unfold in two parts. The first part delves into natureculture learning practices at the MicroCos-Moss Workshop “Thinking with Mosses”¹ during the Climate Care Festival 2023.² Here I share some field notes from the collective participatory observation with the Hybrid Gaze Group.³ In the second part, I imagine how moss life could evolve on site. I do so through trying out posthuman storytelling and feminist speculative fabulation as a practice of worlding (Donna Haraway, 2016) and wonder: What can moss teach us about more-than-human care and cohabitation? What can we learn for the Floating association and the site?

1 The MicroCosMoss Workshop 'ThinkinG with Mosses' has been organized and facilitated by Jacky Hess, Eva-Flore Kovacovsky, Lucy Powell and Susanne Jaschko.
2 Climate Care Festival was curated by Gilly Karjevsky and Rosario Talevi.
3 Hybrid Gaze is an endeavor of Floating association members that I joined as an ethnographer to participate in the 10-day Climate Care Program 2023 in order to digest the Program as learnings for the Floating e.V. The Group consists of Jeanne Astrop-Chauvaux, Garance Maurer, Jöran Mandik, Katherine Ball and Fotini Takirdiki. See p. 8-9

With the Mosses

FIELD NOTES – (CLIMATE CARE, FLOATING 2023)

We gather at the Hay Cinema, nestled between two hay walls right next to the Auditorium, at 2pm for the booked-out workshop “With the Mosses” by a Berlin-based transdisciplinary group consisting of mainly artists and a self-described evolutionary biologist who is missing today. Overcast skies, hovering at approximately 18 degrees with sporadic rain showers – we actually have perfect moss weather, as one of the curators observes. The setting has an art-sciencey vibe, with microscopes, petri dishes, pipettes, and a screen projecting life footage from a microscope. Next to that, there is a little library with nature scientific literature on mosses as well as brushes, pencils, paper, clipboards and other material for sitework. While the Hay Cinema functions as our base and gathering point, the workshop evolves dynamically with in-between field trips and excursions, directing our attention towards the water inflow and the built infrastructures of the Floating site.

A group of 30-40 participants, predominantly women ranging from 25 to 80 years old, came together for the workshop. The introductory round that happens during almost every Floating format serves as a sharing session of names, pronouns and backgrounds, featuring a botanical garden moss specialist, a researcher that focusses on traditional cultures and weaving practices, architecture students from Belgium working on co-habitation, and a broader group embodying the usual Floating crowd with mainly white, academic backgrounds fluent in the Harawayan natureculture language. The workshop is about exploring mosses, their habitat as well as their biology collectively. Structured in two parts, the idea is to understand Floating through mosses in various activities and modes of exploration.

The first part invites us to traverse the site, thoroughly observing our surroundings while reflecting on excerpts from Robin Wall Kimmerer's work „Gathering Moss.“ The book explores the natural history and cultural relationships of mosses connected to indigenous ways of knowing and Kimmerer's personal experiences with mosses. Here, theory and practice are deeply entangled as the focus shifts from the broad discourse on biodiversity to a focused exploration of mosses.

We collectively walk towards Rain

Palace and sit on the stairs gazing towards the water inflow of the basin. Whilst listening to Kimmerer's words we are asked to watch out for moss. I carefully scan my environment and find moss within the interstices of human-made structures, with the realization that the existence of moss in this specific area relates to the presence of these man-made infrastructural elements.

The next activity is practiced right next to the water inflow of the rainwater retention basin, where facilitators distribute magnifying glasses, transforming the collective gaze towards mosses into a nuanced examination. Participants explore mosses along the walls right next the inflow tunnel and above it in the more foresty section along the stairs that lead up to the surrounding allotment gardens. The magnifying lenses allow us to shift scales and perspectives, and to unveil a diversity of moss types, each displaying unique characteristics that come to life. This exploration evokes a collective exchange about the diverse moss species coexisting within this environment—some appearing like bushy grass, others like underwater algae with long threads, and others have dark purple spores sticking out of the green base.

Again, we listen to some excerpts of Kimmerer. Snippets that stick to me are: „the celebration of smallness“, „the art of waiting“ and „limitation as strength“ as well as questions of habitability, namely the necessity of „micro-environments“ or „micro-habitats“, „humid zones“, „moist spaces and „ambient atmospheres“. One of the facilitators stresses that in being small their limitation becomes their strength as it allows them to live protected within the boundary layer between atmosphere and the soil surface. The concept of the „boundary layer“ somehow captivates participants, serving as a critical in-between space inhabited by overlooked yet crucial life forms like fungi, lichens and moss. The boundary layer is an insulated space, it is a fine layer of still air, a humid zone, in which mosses flourish, a facilitator explains.

Returning to our base, participants share their impressions, and C, the moss gardener participant, stands up and takes the floor to express her astonishment regarding the scarcity of mosses on site. She shares her observation that there are almost no mosses on site; that this is rare, nearly impossible and sad to see. On every street in Kreuzberg there is more moss, she says. J, part of the Hybrid Gaze and the association, who seems

concerned by the absence of moss in the basin, asks why they do not grow on site and how they can be supported. Participants and facilitators exchange knowledges regarding the moss absence, with considerations ranging from rubble fields and dry conditions in the basin to sealed surfaces and polluted soils, possibly contaminated with lead or acid. The group seems concerned and reflects on the habitability of the basin for other creatures: If no moss is growing that indicates the poor quality of air and water and therefore the habitability of the site.

The workshop concludes with a guided somatic meditation in the Auditorium. The floor is covered by soft taekwondo mats with a hole in the middle that exhibits large patches of moss that cannot be from Floating; they are from Tegeler Fließ the facilitator reveals. We lay down, heads close to the mosses, each of us receiving a patch of moss that we hold close

to our chest, eyes closed. Blankets envelop bodies as the meditation unfolds, fostering a connection with moss and our human neighbors. The meditation sparks personal reflections on the intersection of art and ecology. The practice of connecting with nature, the environment, moss, and fellow humans through imagination and meditation emerges as a recurring theme at Floating. I wonder how this practice of learning from other life forms and the imaginative act of becoming them is a useful concept for transforming human-environment relations. In the process of decentering anthropos, how far have we come?

On Moss-ters

SPECULATIVE FIELD NOTES

After an extended time abroad, I find myself standing at the basin's edge, taking a long moment noticing the transformations that materialized on site. With a soft gaze I browse through the site and observe a green filter that blankets the entire basin. A lush green interlaced with muddy undertones. The air flowing through my nostrils feels denser, more saturated with moisture than before, and I soon perceive a glossy layer on my skin; reminiscent not of a tropical, but rather a swampy, foresty ambiance. The basin radiates a cooler and more refreshing aura compared to the rest of the city. It exists in an ecotonal realm, bridging terrestrial, aquatic, and extraterrestrial dimensions. An ephemeral mist hovers above the ground. Yet, despite the otherworldly environment, the site welcomes me instead of alienating me. I approach the basin, walking along the tree ring that encircles the hybrid infrastructure, which has been partially unsealed in certain zones.

As I draw near, I spot a group of living beings gathered around the water inflow; undeniably human, yet somehow different, possessing a posthuman quality. Moving cautiously to not disturb them, I realize that even their skin is covered with that green luminescent layer I observed from a distance – a glow, as if they possess an inner light or actually engage in photosynthesis. I wonder whether the layer belongs

to their skin or if it could be peeled away. Immersed into their study, the group wears glasses with hyper-zooming lenses, rendering their eyes obscure. These glasses, similar to those worn by climbers, allow them to examine their subject from different angles and magnifications, focusing on the walls that surround the water inflow – a habitat now dominated by a thriving moss wall community.

As I join the group, maintaining a hesitant distance, they shortly pause, acknowledging my presence. Sharing my curiosity, I reveal my role as an ethnographer exploring this contested urban site in 2023. I recognize several members of the group that have been engaged in the association for years. We exchange hugs, and as I touch their bodies, I realize that the green layer is moss that is integrated into their skin. They explain that following the acknowledgement of the absence of moss during Climate Care 2023, a subset within the association, along with direct neighbors, took it upon themselves to reintroduce moss to the basin. Collaborating with the Space and Hybrid Infrastructures working groups, they experimented towards the next iteration of a Floating yet to come.



Years of relentless lobbying culminated in the submission of a Letter of Intent and the securing of the building permission for the upcoming decade. As the bureaucratic dust settled, a transformative calm pervaded the association, redirecting the focus from mediating human-to-human relations to a profound exploration of the more-than-human perspective. The entire 2024 season developed into an interweaving of public programs and space experimentation; no longer distinct realms but unified in dedication to moss. The group describes that moss finally proliferated on site: After the association partially unsealed the basin, moss beings slowly crawled out of the dark crevices from the tunnel into the water retention basin. A moment of silence endured as we stood by the tunnel opening, attuned to the uncanny sounds and ghostly weird noises resonating from invisible tunnel entities. Moss plants navigated their way out towards the basin, where light and moisture was awaiting them. The group's efforts led to the emergence of a unique breed of urban Floating moss, a testament to the transformative power of collective intention and the alliance between humans and mosses in the Floating association's posthuman narrative.

Equipped with the glasses, I am invited to see the world through the eyes of a critter inhabiting moss. Transported into a moss plant, I discover a miniature jungle with fine branches and micro-animals, witnessing the explosive release of seeds from purple spores with little capsules creating vibrant colors. I put off the glasses and remain dizzy for a while. We sit on moss cushions, and as the group opens up, I learn about their symbiotic bond with moss through epidermal hybridization. They call themselves moss-ters, embracing a moss-human symbiosis and positioning themselves as posthumans undergoing collective moss experiments. The moss-ters indicate the resolution of a years long conflict between the Floating association and the local environmental office and marks the start of a collaboration: moss-ters as political actants and protected species. It is not either moss or humans, it is about kinship and about a specific moss species that only evolved because of human disturbance. The moss-ters serve as a precedent for other urban habitats, emphasizing a protected symbiosis between humans and mosses. A "Speaker for the Moss" advises politics and the Floating organization, aligning operational spheres with moss life (Zöop, 2022). The speaker is appointed by the moss-ters and the environmental office that both engage in moss care. Care is redirected toward more-than-humans, fostering a posthuman association. Moss care instead of technocratic maintenance. One of the moss-ters tells me self-critically that they know they have not fully over-

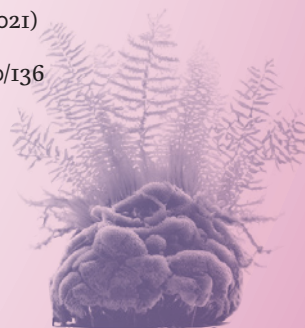
come anthropocentrism, stressing the inability to fully understand moss or be able to speak for them, but they try to understand what they do, to adapt the way they organize and enable cohabitation along that.

If there are conflicts occurring within the association and the landlord of the site, they mainly revolve around creating symmetrical bonds with mosses, acknowledging embodied differences, and aligning with moss behavior. The Spatial and Learning Program merge into an entangled initiative dedicated to exploring natural-cultural qualities of moss and to create moss habitats by working with the mundane materiality of the site and by learning to see moss as a cohabitant and not as an exchangeable resource. Moss infrastructures and habitats flourish in-between urban gaps, softening the sharp edges and transforming built environments into more-than-human ecologies. Porous spaces created by weathering, erosion, and decay, are now filled with moss. By inviting moss, other species will follow and participate in the rainwater community. Retreat spaces, covered with moss cushions, encourage collective care and moss regrowth through stewardship practices. The unsealed basin stores rainwater and creates soothing atmospheres. I reflect on the porous spaces created by weathering, erosion, and decay, now filled with soft mossy cushions and rounded shapes.

As I bid farewell to the group, some questions still linger: What dynamics govern these moss-human relations, and how has biocultural diversity shifted in this posthuman association? Seated on a moss cushion, I take field notes, contemplating the scenography of this experience.

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Die Phänologischen Jahreszeiten

Kim Lang

Die phänologischen Jahreszeiten sind eine Annäherung an die Komplexität der natürlichen Welt. Anstatt mit den vier Jahreszeiten zu kalkulieren wird mit der *Winterlichen Ruhe*, dem *Vorfrühling*, dem *Erstfrühling*, dem *Vollfrühling*, dem *Frühsommer*, dem *Hochsommer*, dem *Spätsommer*, dem *Frühherbst*, dem *Vollherbst* und dem *Spätherbst* gearbeitet. Diese zehn Phasen des natürlichen Jahreskreises werden als phänologische Jahreszeiten bezeichnet.

Ein Phänomen, vom Griechischen phainein „erscheinen“ oder „ans Licht bringen“, bezeichnet „das, was sich den Sinnen zeigt“. In der Theorie ist die Erde eine Kugel, die Kreise um die Sonne zieht. Unsere Sinne hingegen sehen, dass die Sonne am Morgen auf- und am Abend untergeht. Der Himmel ist oben, die Erde ist unten und wir befinden uns irgendwo dazwischen – für Pflanzen ist es dasselbe, so Wolf-Dieter Storl. Sein Ansatz ist es, die unmittelbaren Erscheinungen und nicht abstrakte Theorien als Werkzeuge der Gärtner*innen zu nutzen, um sich an den Zyklen des Jahres zu orientieren.

Das Beobachten und Erkennen von spezifischen phänologischen Ereignissen ist eine Form *Zeit* wahrzunehmen. Während die ersten Austriebe der Brennnessel den *Vorfrühling*



Poster: Kim Lang

ankündigen, läuten die Blüten der Sommerlinde und des Holunders den *Frühsommer* ein. Je nach Klimazone zeigen sich die phänologischen Jahreszeiten zu unterschiedlichen Momenten im Jahr. Die hier erwähnten Phänomene beziehen sich auf den zentral-europäischen Raum.

Vom Klimawandel angetrieben verschieben sich die (phänologischen) Jahreszeiten auf dem gregorianischen Kalender, was unsererseits zu Unsicherheit und Orientierungslosigkeit führen kann. Gestützt auf die phänologischen Jahreszeiten, kann ein Ansatz gefunden werden, um mit Veränderungen lebendig und partizipativ umzugehen. Wer diese Jahreszeiten wie Wolf Dieter-Storl anwenden möchte, bezieht sie auf die Aktivitäten im Zusammenhang mit dem Garten. In meinem Umfeld dienen sie als Orientierung um das Jahr besser mit der Innen- und Aussenwelt zu synchronisieren, sowie zu verstehen wann Recherche-Zeit am Laptop und Innenräumen eingeplant werden soll und wann Aktivitäten draussen zu planen sind und wo es sinnvoll ist eine Ruhepause zu realisieren.

Während des letzten Jahres habe ich mir selber eine Nachricht geschickt, wenn ich etwas Bemerkenswertes in meiner lebendigen Umwelt entdeckt habe. Sie sind unverändert auf der folgenden Seite abgedruckt.

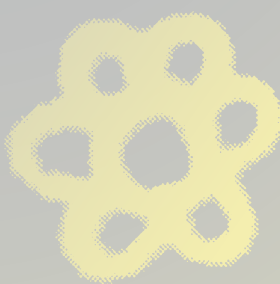
DIE PHÄNOLOGISCHEN JAHRESZEITEN, NACH WOLF DIETER-STORL

WINTERLICHE RUHEZEIT	VORFRÜHLING	ERSTFRÜHLING	VOLLFRÜHLING	FRÜHSOMMER
85 Tage	38 Tage, blühende Schneeglöckchen (<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>), Krokus (<i>Crocus</i>), Scharbockskraut (<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>), Weidenkätzchen (<i>Salicaceae</i>); erster Austrieb Brennnessel (<i>Urtica</i>)	35 Tage, blühende Forsythie (<i>Forsythia</i>), Schlüsselblume (<i>Primula vulgaris</i>), Busch-Windröschen (<i>Anemone nemorosa</i> L.), blühender Kirschbaum (<i>Prunus</i>); Wiesen werden grün	30 Tage, blühendes Schöllkraut (<i>Chelidonium majus</i>), blühende Apfelbäume (<i>Malus</i> spp.), blühender Flieder (<i>Syringa</i>), Löwenzahn (<i>taraxacum</i>); Blattbildung Buche (<i>Fagus</i>) und Fichten (<i>Picea</i>)	23 Tage, blühender Holunder (<i>Sambucus</i>), in milden Regionen: blühende Sommerlinde (<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>); Beginn der Erdbeerernte (<i>Fragaria</i>)
HOCHSOMMER	SPÄTSOMMER	FRÜHHERBST	VOLLHERBST	SPÄTHERBST
45 Tage, blühende Sommerlinde (<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>), blühende Wegwarte (<i>Cichorium intybus</i>), Ernte Johannisbeeren (<i>Ribes</i>), Heuernte	23 Tage, Getreideernte; Obsternte: Frühe Sorten; blühende Herbstanemone (<i>Anemone hupehensis</i>)	25 Tage, Ernte Holunderbeeren (<i>Sambucus</i>), Birnen (<i>Pyrus communis</i>), Äpfel (<i>Malus</i> spp.), Hagbutten (<i>rosa</i>), Kornelkirschen (<i>Cornus mas</i>); Haselnüsse beginnen zu reifen (<i>Corylus avellana</i>)	23 Tage, Ernte Quitten (<i>Cydonia oblonga</i>), Pflaumen (<i>Prunus domestica</i>), Walnüsse (<i>Juglans regia</i>); Rosskastanien (<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>) und Eicheln (<i>Quercus</i>) reifen heran; erste Blätter beginnen zu fallen	21 Tage, herbstabwerfende Laubbäume verlieren vollständig ihre Blätter

23 Nov 2022, 11:17:11, Genf (CH) first time of the year that cycling without gloves hurts	28 Mar 2023, 20:45:01, Genf (CH) swans building nests	01 Apr w2023, 08:32:25, Genf (CH) wiesen werden grün	14 Apr 2023, 16:26:32, Zugfahrt Genf – Basel (CH) raps blüht (schon seit einer Woche)
14 Apr 2023, 17:14:45, Basel (CH) blätter sind sich am entfalten	14 Apr 2023, 17:16:57, Basel (CH) löwenzahnblüte voll draussen	28 Mai 2023, 16:23:52, Genf (CH) s erschte maaal sünnele und bade vom jaaaahr!:) (das erste Mal Sonnenbaden in diesem Jahr)	28 Mai 2023, 16:24:01, Genf (CH) erste schwalben gesehen
28 Mai 2023, 20:05:03, Genf (CH) felder wurden das erste Mal dieses Jahr gemäht?!	29 Mai 2023, 09:16:15, Basel (CH) roses are fully out	29 Mai 2023, 09:16:22, Basel (CH) cherrys are slowly growing	31 Mai 2023, 18:13:49, Genf (CH) lavendel Blüten sind da
06 Jun 2023, 20:31:04, Basel (CH) body needs to adapt to the heat... feel dizzy	07 Jun 2023, 08:38:07, Genf (CH) lindenblüten daa	18 Jun 2023, 18:36:39, Genf (CH) malven blühen seit sicher 1 woche	19 Jun 2023, 10:19:50, ToPolò (IT) hollunder verblüht ~ kleine Früchte/Beeren beginnen zu wachsen
26 Jun 2023, 15:01:47, ToPolò (IT) hollunder beeren reifen ran	26 Jun 2023, 15:01:57, ToPolò (IT) trauben wachsen ganz langsam ran	6 Jul 2023, 12:17:52, AarGau (CH) haselnüsse fertige nuss aber noch bleich, brombeeren fertige frucht und noch nicht reif	21 Jul 2023, 19:48:11, Zürich (CH) holunder beeren werden rot ~ malvensträucher blühen seit gut 1 woche
24 Jul 2023, 11:26:45, AarGau (CH) erste feige aus dem garten vor etwa 3 tagen	4 Aug 2023, 16:07:38, Zürich (CH) im “erdvogel” gemeinschaftsgarten reifende holunderbeeren entdeckt	9 Aug 2023, 14:09:22, AarGau (CH) die kartoffeln sind mit dem vielen Regen richtig in die Höhe geschossen	9 Aug 2023, 14:11:27, Zürich (CH) seit einer woche verkaufen wir die ersten äpfel im Bioladen
26 Aug 2023, 10:39:15, AarGau (CH) nach einer sehr heissen woche wieder regen und abkühlung und die ersten bäume kriegen gelbe/ rote blätter	15 Sep 2023, 17:12:55, Zürich (CH) es schwimmen ein paar herbstblätter die Limmat runter ~ immer noch mehr schwimmende Menschen als Blätter :-)	22 Sep 2023, 08:36:09, Zürich (CH) viele menschen sind erkältet ~ die tage sind unter 20 grad ~ es regnet	23 Sep 2023, 19:38:11, AarGau (CH) first time that i want to wear a hat
24 Sep 2023, 18:51:57, AarGau (CH) i love this time of the year when the leaves are still green ~ the fruits ripe ~ the skin sunkissed and the air crispy fresh	6 Oct 2023, 08:08:01, AarGau (CH) today i see my own breath	6 Oct 2023, 08:38:51, Zürich (CH) wasserdampf steigt auf in der morgensonne auf der Limmat	10 Oct 2023, 20:31:41, Zürich (CH) warme tage ~ ich trage bloss meine strickweste mit hemd drunter
14 Oct 2023, 10:50:26, Zürich (CH) temperatureinbruch ~ wind, regen und blätter fallen	15 Oct 2023, 18:18:37, AarGau (CH) grosse Feigenernte	26 Oct 2023, 13:05:33, Zürich (CH) die Blätter sind so bunt ~ einige fallen zu boden ~ viele sind noch dran	20 Nov 2023, 09:50:32, Graubünden (CH) unglaublich viel schnee! juhee.



Kim Lang lebt in der Schweiz und beschäftigt sich seit 2021 mit den Phänologischen Jahreszeiten. Aus ihrer Recherche ist ein Poster entstanden, auf welchem der Phänologische Kalender abgedruckt ist. Bis zum Hochsommer widmet sie sich ihrem Studium (Kunstpädagogik) und hofft in der späten winterlichen Ruhe 2025 eine Neuauflage des Posters zu drucken.
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/ Plantanism@riseup.net



Note taken from Kim's Seed-letter #10:
"The concePtual 'i': it feels wrong to me to write a capital 'i'. With the wish to meet others – her, them, him – at eye level, in lanGuaGe too."

Transformationslabor für feuchte Fragilität

Sarah Bovelett & Lorenz Kuschnig Lefort



Image: Sebastian Díaz de León

Das Transformationslabor für feuchte Fragilität versucht unser Verständnis der Architekturproduktion in Frage zu stellen. Während das dominierende Narrativ darin verstrickt ist technische Anpassungsmaßnahmen zu entwickeln und scheinbar nachhaltige „Lösungen“ zu erfinden, die dennoch dem Gedanken einer wachstumsorientierten Logik folgen und einen Rattenschwanz von neuen Problemen mit sich ziehen, wollen wir uns unserer eigenen Fragilität stellen.

Wie kann unsere Praxis fragil sein?
Was bedeutet Fragilität in Bezug auf die Produktion von Raum?

Im Transformationslabor für feuchte Fragilität bedienen wir uns performativer und künstlerischer Elemente, die uns die Möglichkeit geben auszubrechen, unsere Methoden zu erweitern und Raum für Experimente und Verwundbarkeiten zu schaffen. Das Experiment erlaubt uns das Arbeiten mit offenem Ausgang, bei dem der Prozess im Vordergrund steht.

Unser Fokus liegt auf den Wasserinfrastrukturen, die uns sichtbar und unsichtbar umgeben. Das Wasser, in seinen verschiedenen Aggregatzuständen und Verschmutzungsgraden, das durch sie hindurchfließt, ist überall, in uns und um uns herum. Wasserinfrastrukturu-

ren durchziehen unseren gesamten Planeten und haben einen immensen Anteil an unserer gebauten Umgebung. Wir beginnen unseren Prozess genau damit, diese Wasserinfrastrukturen in einer Bestandsaufnahme zu verstehen – in welchen Abhängigkeiten sie stehen, wie sie funktionieren, benutzt und transformiert werden.

Da Architektur, wenn sie nicht nur Theorie sein möchte, einen Ort braucht, haben wir uns verortet. Die erste Station macht das Transformationslabor im Regenwasserrückhaltebecken Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. Ein Ort, der gespeist wird vom Regenwasser der versiegelten Flächen des Tempelhofer Flughafens und der anliegenden Straße Columbiadamm. Das Gewächshaus ist dabei vor Ort unser Rückzugs- und Recherche-Basislager. Ein Ort für Austausch, Aktion und das Ins-Machen-Kommen auf unserer Gummistiefeltour in feucht-fragile Prozesse. Im Regenwasserrückhaltebecken starten wir mit der Untersuchung des Bestands und einem Verständnis der beteiligten menschlichen und mehr-als-menschlichen Akteuren. Unsere weitere Laborarbeit im Becken findet dabei in ganz verschiedenen Maßstäben, Zeitleisten und Methoden statt.

Wir sind langsam und wir haben Zeit.
Alles ist gleich wichtig und alles ist schon da.

Das Regenwasserrückhaltebecken ist als rein technische Infrastruktur mit der einzigen Funktion bedacht, das Regenwasser von der versiegelten Fläche des Flughafengebäudes, des Vorfeldes und der Straße Columbiadamm rückzuhalten, um es dann verzögert abzugeben. Die Funktion ist simpel: Das kontaminierte Wasser wird durch einen großen Tunnel in das Becken eingeleitet und fließt langsam durch ein kleineres Rohr wieder raus, in den Landwehrkanal. Nachdem der Flughafen jedoch außer Betrieb genommen wurde und auch die Art der Instandhaltung, der trotzdem noch immer notwendigen Infrastruktur vernachlässigt wurde, begann sich dort ein Ökosystem zu entwickeln. Das Becken übernahm von jetzt an verschiedene Funktionen und wurde von selbst zu einer hybriden Infrastruktur, als Lebensraum für Pflanzen und Tiere, mit einem urbanen Feuchtgebiet und positiven Auswirkungen auf das Stadtklima.

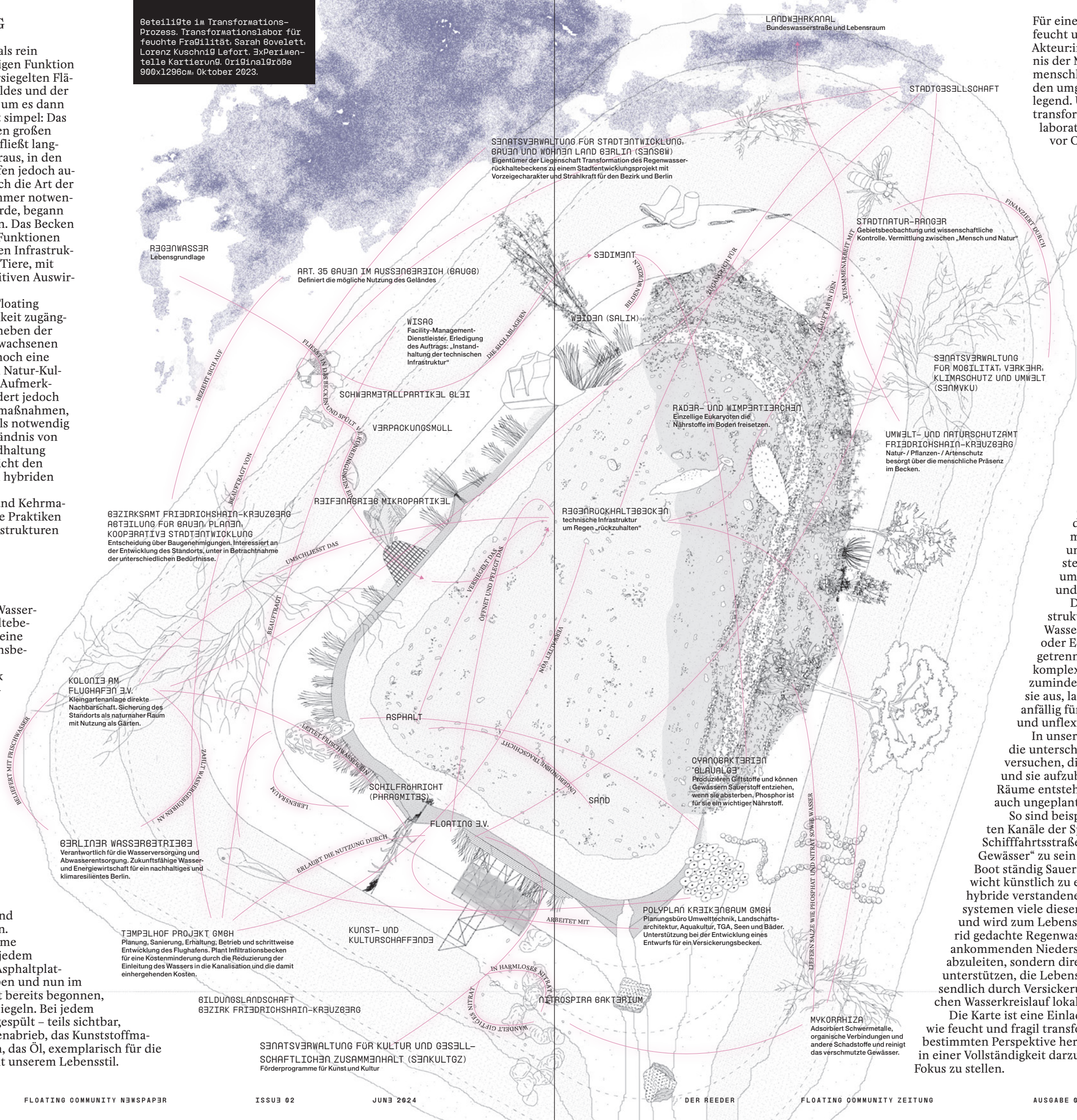
Seit 2018 wird der Ort durch den Floating University e.V. auch für die Öffentlichkeit zugänglich gemacht. Fortan überlagern sich neben der technischen Infrastruktur und der gewachsenen Grün- und Wasserinfrastruktur auch noch eine sozio-kulturelle Infrastruktur, die den Natur-Kultur-Lernort entstehen lässt. Die neue Aufmerksamkeit, die das Becken erhält, verändert jedoch auch die Pflege- und Instandhaltungsmaßnahmen, die von der Betreiberin des Beckens als notwendig erachtet werden. Das klassische Verständnis von technischer Infrastruktur und Instandhaltung eines asphaltierten Beckens widerspricht den Bedürfnissen dieser neu entwickelten hybriden Infrastruktur.

Wie kann Reinigung mit Baggern und Kehrmaschinen abgelöst werden durch andere Praktiken des Pflegens, die auch lebendige Infrastrukturen unterstützen?

DAS BECKEN HAT TRANSFORMATIONSBEDARF.

Um die beteiligten Akteur:innen der Wasserinfrastruktur des Regenwasserrückhaltebeckens besser zu verstehen, haben wir eine Momentaufnahme der Transformationsbeteiligten skizziert. Die Kartierung versucht, die beteiligten Gruppen, Politik und Verwaltung, Ressourcen, Lebewesen, Gesetze und Prozesse nebeneinander aufzuzeigen und ihnen eine Art gleichwertige Handlungsmacht zu geben. Die Kartierung versammelt die Motive und Perspektiven der Beteiligten, um aufzudecken, wie und mit wem Transformation verhandelt werden muss. Neben den vielen menschlichen Handlungen vor Ort ist auch ein sich entwickelndes Ökosystem aktiv beteiligt. Im angeschwemmten Regenwasser entwickeln sich im Becken Algen, die bei geringem Wasserstand zu Sedimenten vertrocknen. Dieses Sediment bildet Nährboden für Pflanzen, die darin Wurzeln und wiederum mehr Biomasse produzieren. Schließlich wachsen sogar Weidenbäume auf dieser asphaltierten Fläche. Nach jedem starken Regen lassen sich außerdem Asphaltplatten beobachten, die sich losgelöst haben und nun im Becken herumtreiben. Das Becken hat bereits begonnen, sich langsam aber stetig selbst zu entsiegeln. Bei jedem Regen wird kontaminiertes Wasser angespült – teils sichtbar, aber auch unsichtbar stehen der Reifenabrieb, das Kunststoffmaterial, das Mikroplastik, die Zigaretten, das Öl, exemplarisch für die Herausforderungen unserer Städte mit unserem Lebensstil.

Beteiligt9te im Transformations-Prozess. Transformationslabor für feuchte Fragilität. Sarah Bovelett, Lorenz Kuschni9 Lefort. ExPerimentelle Kartierung9. Original9größe 900x1296cm, Oktober 2023.



BESTANDSAUFNAHME URBANER WASSER-INFRASTRUKTUREN

Die Karte (nächste Seite 26/27) ist Ergebnis von Besuchen und Recherchen, um den Status Quo in Berlin und Brandenburg und darüber hinaus zu verstehen. Entlang des Wasserkreislaufs folgen wir den urbanen Wasser-Infrastrukturen, um ihre Vernetzung und Beziehung miteinander zu verdeutlichen. Aufgezeigt wird der Bestand sowie Ideen und Potenziale, die für die Zukunft skizziert werden. Es gibt mehrere Einstiegspunkte in die Karte und unterschiedliche Arten, sie zu lesen. Die Darstellungen springen zwischen den Maßstäben, um die Sichtbarkeit bestimmter Situationen und Vorgänge zu unterstreichen.

Die Karte offenbart, dass Wasserinfrastrukturen, wie eine Schifffahrtsstraße, die Wasserspültoilette, die Abwasserkanalisation oder Entwässerungsanlagen oft monofunktional, getrennt, technisch, fachspezifisch, unsichtbar, komplex, unzugänglich und abgegrenzt sind, oder zumindest so verstanden werden. Damit schließen sie aus, lassen wenigen Lebensformen Raum, sind anfällig für Klimaveränderungen, wartungsintensiv und unflexibel.

In unserer Betrachtung interessieren uns dabei die unterschiedlichen Ansätze und Perspektiven, die versuchen, diese Monofunktionalität zu hinterfragen und sie aufzubrechen, um multicodierte und hybride Räume entstehen zu lassen. Dies passiert geplant, aber auch ungeplant.

So sind beispielsweise die monofunktional gedachten Kanäle der Spree mit hohen Spundwänden primär als Schifffahrtsstraßen gedacht. Weit davon entfernt „natürliche Gewässer“ zu sein und auch wie solche zu agieren, muss ein Boot ständig Sauerstoff hineinpumpen, um das Gleichgewicht künstlich zu erhalten. Im Kontrast dazu übernimmt ein hybride verstandener städtischer Fluss mit lebendigen Ökosystemen viele dieser „Instandhaltungsaufgaben“ von alleine und wird zum Lebensraum und Lebensader der Stadt. Eine hybrid gedachte Regenwasserinfrastruktur eines Innenhofs versucht ankommenden Niederschlag nicht mehr nur in die Kanalisation abzuleiten, sondern direkt vor Ort Biodiversität und Klima zu unterstützen, die Lebensqualität für viele zu erhöhen und schlussendlich durch Versickerung biologisch gereinigt und dem natürlichen Wasserkreislauf lokal zurückgeführt zu werden.

Die Karte ist eine Einladung zum Austausch und zur Diskussion, wie feucht und fragil transformiert wird und werden könnte. Aus einer bestimmten Perspektive heraus gezeichnet, versucht sie nicht alles in einer Vollständigkeit darzustellen, eher einzelne Situationen in den Fokus zu stellen.

Ausschnitt aus Bestandsaufnahme urbaner Wasserinfrastrukturen. Transformationslabor für feuchte Fragilität. Sarah Bovelett, Lorenz Kuschnig Lefort. Experimentelle Kartierung. Originalgröße 900x1296cm, Oktober 2023.

HYBRIDE INFRASTRUKTUR

UMVERTEILUNG UND NUTZUNG DES REGENWASSERS

VERDUNSTUNGSPFLANZEN

FRAGILE TRANSFORMATION IST LANGSAM UND HAT ZEIT.

IDEENSKIZZE FÜR EIN VERSICKERUNGSBECKEN ALS NATUR-KULTUR-LERNORT

TECHNISCHE FUNKTION

RESSOURCE TRINKWASSER

SCHWAMMSTADT

DEZENTRALE NATURNÄHE REGENWASSER-BEWIRTSCHAFTUNG. IDEENSKIZZE FÜR EIN SCHILFBEET ZUR REGENWASSERVERDUNSTUNG

MIKROPLASTIK BEEINFLUSST DIE WOLKENBILDUNG

FRAGILITÄT BEDeutET SICH NICHT IN VORSORGE UND ANPASSUNG ZU VERSTRICKEN, SONDERN SICH DEN EIGENEN VERWUNDBARKEITEN ZU STELLEN.

REGENWASSER

FASSADENBEDRÜCKUNG

BODENENTWASSERUNG

ROHRPOSTTOILETTE

GRÜNWASSERAUFBEREITUNG

GRÜNWASSER NEUBILDUNG

GRÜNWASSER FAUNA

GRÜNWASSER GLEICHEN

NIPHARGUS DER HÖHLENFLOHKRABE

URSTROMTAL

GRÜNWASSER ENTNAHME

FRAGIL SEIN HEISST, ZU VERZICHTEN, KONSUM UND RESSOURCENVERBRAUCH GRUNDSÄTZLICH IN FRAGE ZU STELLEN.

DIE PFLEGE UND INSTANDHALTUNG EINER INFRASTRUKTUR BEDARF DAS IN BETRACHT ZIEHEN VIELER PERSPEKTIVEN.

ÖKOSYSTEMLEISTUNG

WASSERFLÄCHE

REGENRÜCKHALTBECKEN KREUZBERG

PFLÖG UND INSTANDHALTUNG

FRAGILE ENTSIEGELUNG

TECHNOKRATIE IST NICHT DIE LÖSUNG.

HYBRIDE INFRASTRUKTUREN BRAUCHEN HYBRIDE METHODEN.

CYANOBAKTERIEN „BLAUALGEN“

BELÜFTUNGSSCHIFF „RUDOLF KLOOS“

WIR BEHANDELN DIE RESSOURCEN, UND DIE ART UND WEISE, WIE „NATUR“ FUNKTIONIEREN SOLL, MIT DERSSELBEN LOGIK WIE EINTECHNISCHE INFRASTRUKTUR.

SPREE

MISCHWASSERÜBERLAUF BEI STARKREGEN

FISCHSTERGEN IN DER SPREE

SPREEWALDGURKE

ABHÄNGIG VOM WASSER-EXTRAKTIVISMUS

ABWASSERKANALISATION

TAGEBAUENTWASSERUNGSSCHEMA

Das Transformationslabor für feuchte Fragilität entstand im Rahmen der Masterarbeit von Sarah Bovelett und Lorenz Kuschnig Lefort im Fachbereich Architektur an der Universität der Künste Berlin, Oktober 2023. Die Arbeit wurde betreut von Prof. Markus Bader, Silvia Gioberti sowie Prof. Dr. Tatjana Schneider.

Sarah Bovelett is a sPatial Practitioner. As Part of the team behind the Floating University she is actively involved in the Production of sSpace and Progam in this urban water infrastructure. With the collective mould, she researches at the Institute for History and Theory of Architecture and the City at the Technical University Braunschweig in the Project Architecture After Architecture: sPatial Practice in the Face of Climate Emergency. She has studied architecture at the Universität der Künste Berlin, and Interior Architecture and Furniture Design at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague and Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm.

Lorenz Kuschnig Lefort is a Berlin-based architect. He studied Interior Architecture at Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design Halle and Architecture at the University of the Arts Berlin. As a founding member of Floating e.V., he has been actively involved in the development of experimental architecture for the Floating University Iterations since 2018 for artistic and experimental approaches to address climate and resource complexities and contribute to social transformation. Since 2017 he is Part of POPTICUM, creating sSpaces to facilitate collective experiences and advocating for a community-oriented approach to tackling complex questions for our future. For the Planning and Implementation of Projects, he also emphasizes interdisciplinary teamwork in his freelance works combining theory and Practice.

26 THE REEDER FLOATING COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER ISSUE 02 JUNE 2024

DER REEDER FLOATING COMMUNITY ZEITUNG AUSGABE 02 JUNI 2024 27

Climate Care's Auca

Max Azemar & Marina Olivares

An auca is a cartoon
story, traditionally
made in Catalonia

Marina Olivares is a transdisciplinary artist from Barcelona. Her artistic research has two branches: the relationship between affects and culture, and the relationship between nature and culture. She combines her activity as an artist, performer, actress, and member of the creative collective Matriu.id (of which she is also co-founder). Together with Max Azemar, she was selected to enjoy a Grant from Sala d'Art Jove to attend the Climate Care Festival 2023.

Max Azemar After working as a subway driver and flight attendant, Max has finally found his dream job: being an urban arboriculture technician in Barcelona. Time to time he does some lecture performances to talk about Pretty things. He is part of the curatorial collective Grup d'Estudi. Together with Marina Olivares, he was selected to enjoy a Grant from Sala d'Art Jove to attend the Climate Care Festival 2023.



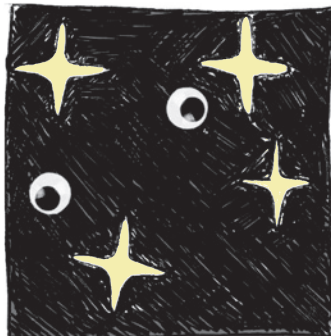
Two foreigners came to this strange place and from the very beginning, they were amazed!



Wow, look! This place is full of biodiversity! But this isn't floating; nor is it a university!



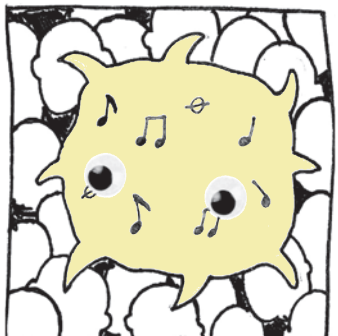
They had experiences that they don't want to forget, so let's remember some of the entities they met:



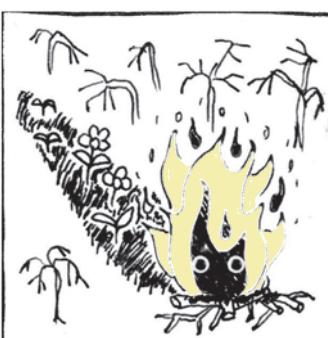
A creature that claims the right to darkness in some cities, this might sound like madness!



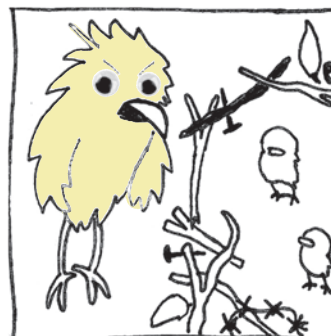
The cooler it is, the more boring it looks, said the astrologist to the Berghain's rooks.



A creature of the choir appears when it is full moon, But only if we sing all together soon!



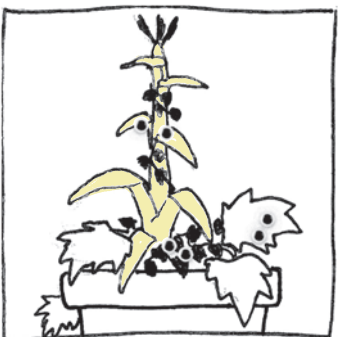
They are necessary, but they feel sad! Being a disturbance is not so bad...



This bird wanted to make a nest but the chicks couldn't do it best!



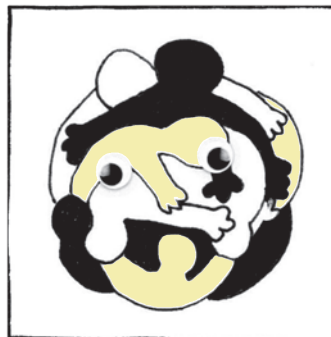
"Stay very small" said the moss to all.



Of course this three sisters' fraternity says something about hybridity!



TDD always prepared meals of glory, indeed, this was the best part of the story!



"Make friends, not art" this was ruangrupa's reward.

The basin of attentions

Jade Dreyfuss

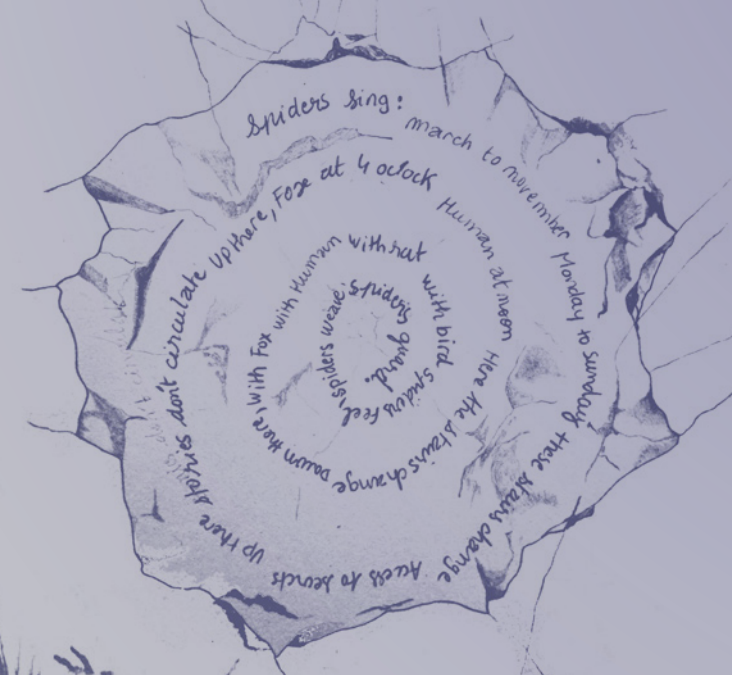
You stop. You don't see them much. And yet they are there, we just don't pay attention to them. Why? No time? We would know what time to meet the foxes and where, we would know where to find a tree and a squirrel, wouldn't we? Don't you ever get tired of seeing so many humans? Tomorrow, someone has written on a wall down the road from me: "If you come across the squirrel, think about what you might have forgotten. Go to the basin of attentions, Lilienthalstraße 32". You and I enter the address. We go across a cube of metal steps, then walk along a large footbridge. We come with what we have forgotten. It almost feels like we're going somewhere, as we decide to follow this pathway. Here, it is a pond where the rain falls. A rat floats on the water's surface. A group of humans approaches us: it looks like we're going to have a meeting. Then a woman turns around and comes back with a shovel. Together, we put the rat in the ground. Someone says that a child named the rat Teo, and that the meeting begins now. We use the footbridge to head for higher ground, where we seem to pursue the meeting. But as we approach the end, a child leaves a drawing in a garden bed, at the flower's foot. Our group stops, and someone says to us: "look at their hand."



The child's hand is indeed slightly bent. We are told that one day, while gardening in the rainwater basin, a woman picked a very tired bee, below a flower. She stopped her work to warm the chilly one's body. The two gardeners sat down together near a circle of women singing for themselves and for each other. The human didn't know if the vibration of their voices and the warmth of her hand would be enough to revive the bee. The insect who looked so tired just a few minutes earlier, found the strength to sit down against the large hand's folds. Once the concert was over, the bee didn't fly away, and the human set it down below the flower where she had found it. Someone continued: "In autumn, the flower will drop its seeds. Some will be harvested by the humans of the basin, others will be spread in the bellies of crows, or in other places. One will fall on the very spot where the bee turned into earth. During the cold season, it is said that nothing will happen. The bees will huddle in their hive, as humans will do with their loved ones. Comes the rebirth season, a bee will emerge from the hive and will recognise the strong scent of the regrown flower. While foraging, the bee will

have become aware of certain vibrations and particular smells. From then on, when it comes across the gardener, it will sit on her sweater and the flower will become a mailbox for the bees. At its foot, stories for the bees called 'attentions' will be placed, and the seeds will be carefully preserved. It will be customary to fold the hand slightly before beginning an attention." You and I ask why this person is speaking in the future tense. And we are told that here, we make a distinction between what has happened and what will happen. We invent the future, it is in our gestures. The basin of attentions is the basin of our wishes. What kind of story is this child telling the bees? I wonder what their drawing means to them and the flying guardians.

You walk towards the big white doors. The child with the drawing runs ahead and disappears behind the building. A calendar fixed to the walls is lifted by the wind. It says "fox". We all stop. It looks like we will have to continue our meeting somewhere else. "Why don't we set up here?" We ask. The wind rips off the calendar, which flies before our eyes. "The urban forest is occupied", we are told. Someone whispers something in a corner inside. The group continues on their way, we follow. I give you a note I picked up before we left:



We walk along a flat corridor lined with reeds. The sun illuminates the trees, the concrete, the mud, the water, the wood, the metal, the bubbles of white fabric. At the end, a tree is planted with reeds at the corner of the footbridge. Someone is watering them. “You want me to water you?” she asks. I answer, “With pleasure”. As she waters me, she explains that here, the reeds absorb situations, repeat and develop. She says: “One day, a human watered a tree that lived among the reeds. Suddenly, the bridge began to croak. Impossible to see the frog, but the human regularly watered the croaking place during the dry season. Another day, as she was watering the reed, the tree and the frog, a human asked her if she could water them too. The story goes that if you want to change a situation, there's nothing better than telling it to the reeds, by watering them. They'll bring you different perspectives, new connections you might not have thought of, encounters. If you hear the reeds whispering in the wind, it means they're repeating the stories, but be careful, sometimes they get everything mixed up.” Someone adds that in the past, the band of reeds was in the middle of the basin, close to the frogs and across from the bees. But one day, the authorities took them away, suspecting that they contained toxic substances. The humans of the basin saved some of them, bringing them close to the footbridges. Then a whole swathe of reeds began to grow between the slats of wood and

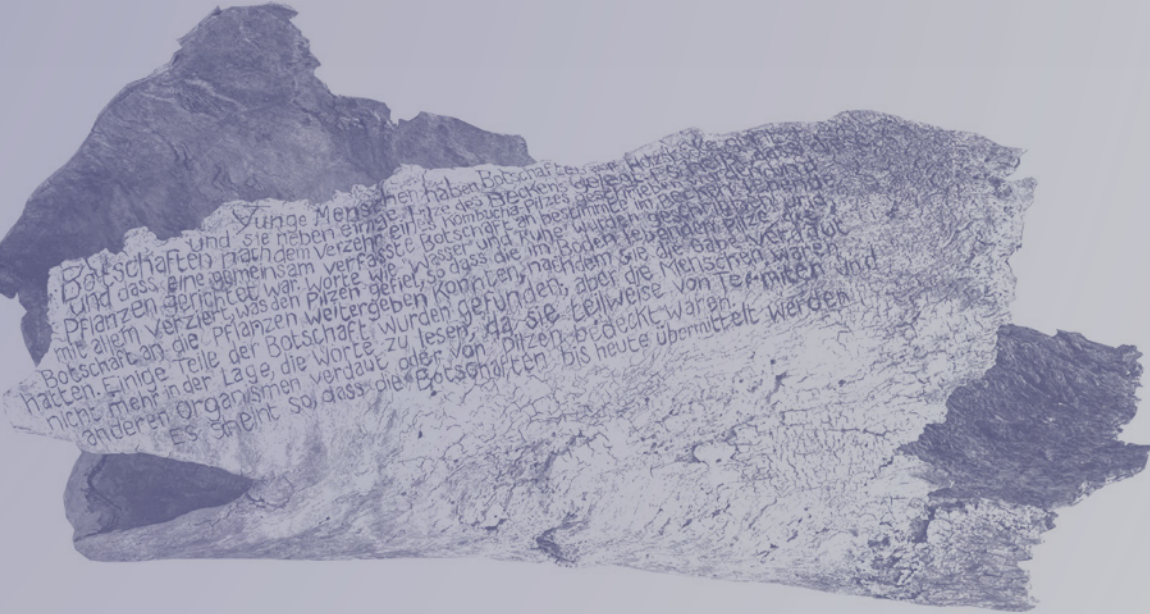
around the walkways. Hence why, the reeds grew closer to the humans. It is said that they hold the memory of this place, and that all the stories that touch the water are passed on to them. You add: “When it rains, the stories will reach the reeds, and the stories will be repeated, mixed, heard again and rewritten”.

The meeting ends there. We are escorted out and back up the stairwell. A message written on a large stump catches our attention. It stands on an earthy corner near the entrance, apparently shared with a neighbour:

“Young humans have carved messages on pieces of wood and placed them at the feet of certain mushrooms around the basin. It is said that these attentions were written after ingesting a kombucha scoby, and that a message composed collectively was addressed to certain plants living in the pond. Words such as ‘water’ and ‘rest’ were written and decorated with everything the mushrooms liked, in the hope they could pass on the message to the plants, after digesting the offering. Some bits of the message have been found, but humans were no longer able to read the words, which were partly eaten by termites and other organisms, or covered in fungi. It seems that these messages are still being transmitted.”

Before we leave, one tells us: “You are welcome here. On your next visit, you can give or receive attentions, and slip their story into this box.” We are shown a box placed inside the stump.

Jade Dreßfuss is an artist, illustrator and Projectionist. After completing a master's degree in visual and spatial arts at the ERG in Brussels, she worked in Berlin for Antonia Baehr and Lucile Desamory as assistant. For the past three years, she has been a member of the Floating University, where, in collaboration with Kidsuni, she gives artistic workshops for children. She collaborates artistically with theatre, science, music and alternative culture fields. [instagram.com/jadedressfuss](https://www.instagram.com/jadedressfuss)



Analogue Images: Garance Maurer (2023)



Korail-City of Culture is a sustainable urban development initiative in collaboration with Paraa and the Goethe Institute in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Korail-City of Culture redefines the concept of design culture and the creative industries, particularly in terms of by whom, how, and where culture is 'produced', and for whom. The project aims to support cultural practitioners and producers living, working, and playing in Korail in establishing sustainable cultural practices, and to feed this knowledge back into processes of global and local learning and teaching on sustainable urban development.

Korail



In November 2023 Rosario Talevi and Garance Maurer traveled to Bangladesh in the framework of Korail – City of Culture, a cooperative urban development initiative with the residents of Korail – the largest low-income neighbourhood in Dhaka.





PhotoGraphicio i.mpression of Dhaka by Rosario Talevi (2023)

Unsealing Floating

Learnscares 2023

Text: Kristin Laz

How can we imagine the transformation of this temporary utopia in a concrete basin into a hybrid public infrastructure – a rainwater infiltration landscape as a civic space for artistic and learning practices?

Unsealing Floating was an open invitation to all visiting student groups to engage with the topic of unsealing and support Floating University in becoming an agent of transformation in the process of unsealing and redesigning the basin.

3/5, Berlin, 28.02.2024

Dear Vida,

We first want to thank you warmly for your answer, that unfolds a lot of questions for us, individually and as members of Floating, part of the editorial team of the Reeder, a publication too. I'm sure this resonance will also reach our readers.

Today, I, Garance, will continue our exchange, extending a dialogue into a polylogue.

I find the double perspective of individual-collective (if not more) from which one writes interesting: you are a person, an individual, and part of a collective, of a team, of a place, in a space. The situatedness is transversal, and this movement traverses bodies, groups and places, (inter-)personal histories and geographies are woven together. And you can access them through doors as you say.

I encountered a sentence two days ago that struck me very much and made me think about your letter: "how do you navigate the world?". It touched me first with the word gate hidden in *navigate*, another word for door. Quickly this word started moving in my mind, as if carried by myself when I'm navigating the world, as a door or a window from which you would observe and experience it. Again, movement. The circulation of a word, of a parole, of a publication that carries within itself a place, a place which hosts in itself other circulations, entanglements and woven trajectories. A loop... How to embrace and express this complexity? I am thankful for your thoughts about partiality. It gives more lightness indeed and allows more movement, better motion.

As I've read this sentence as part of a performance about borders and migrations, about attempts to enter the EU from unofficial doors, it raised the question of hospitality and thresholds.

If we are the door to the basin, and you're the door to Topolò, we are door-holders, door-keepers, door-openers. The first face of a place, we're welcoming newcomers and hugging old friends. Standing on the threshold, somehow static we also traverse places and borders, our ship being these travelling publications. Readings and writings connect different places.

In both our projects, we practise hospitality on site and in our pages, welcoming these multiplicity of voices and situations. But from Floating's perspective, I know that welcoming protocols are adapted every time. What is your experience in welcoming people in Topolò as Robida collective? And welcoming voices in Robida Magazine?

What are the few things that you share for all of it to be understandable and navigated safely?

Hugs from Berlin,
Garance

continues on p.38

This season we aimed to reflect practices of un-, re- and co-learning through the notion of unsealing. Beyond the literal spatial transformation of the rainwater basin, in which Floating is entangled, the act of unsealing can be understood as emancipatory, radical, liberating.

"Sous les pavés, la plage!" Unsealing can be understood as questioning established planning processes, breaking out of institutional borders and entrenched learning methods, developing new ways of practice-based knowledge production, envisioning alternative futures and narratives.

The 2023 Learnscape semester was structured around the Midterms, with interactive presentations of student works in July and concluded with the Symposium in September.

The Learnscares Symposium invited past, present and future participants of the Learnscares Programme for two days of workshops, talks and get-togethers - on the topics of soil and water at Floating and beyond.

At the midterm, students that have been working at Floating and engaging with the site this year presented their (preliminary) work. The Midterms were conceptualised as *Stationentheater*, where every group shaped a presentation station with their work, actions, interactions and presentations. Community lunch and dinner were characterised by culinary art by artist Julia Klink – as vegan regional seafood and layered tacos.

In the following we are presenting a few workshops, exhibitions, projects and formats that have contributed to the learning landscapes of Floating in 2023.

"Unsealing Floating" Learnscares 2023 documentation, 48P. Edited by Kristin Laz and Lisa van Heijden. Designed by Roman Karrer. Printed by tri99er.medien.9mbh, Berlin. Available as download on our RePository: floating-berlin.org/unsealing-doku



Soils Blankets and Feuille de terrain

EXHIBITION

By Johanna Bendlin,
Falma Fshasi, Giulia Ravera (Super Terram)

Super Terram focuses on urban soils in Brussels. The project aims to bring out new ways of developing our cities by mobilising communities to bring out, count and amplify alternative ways and narratives of engaging with urban soils.

The Soils Blankets workshop at Floating evolved in three steps: An Introduction; A Reflection through the Feuille de terrain (Field Notes) and a Recollection through a collective output: the soils blanket.

Participants worked with the Feuille de terrain - inspired by the ethnologist's field journal, it is a tool for multi-voice observation and information gathering. They were encouraged to draw, glue, stich, stamp, stain findings about the soil on site. The objective was to open the scientific tool (the field journal) up to the use of many, in order to cross common knowledge and scientific knowledge, professionalised knowledge and civic knowledge. After talking about their observations, the participants translated the multiplicity of unheard voices, uncommonly expressed feelings, unnoticed opinions, tacit knowledge about the soil at Floating into a Soil Blanket installation.



Image: Rosa Merk

Raising water-wareness

WORKSHOP

By Bene Wahlbrink, Eugenio Cappuccio,
Julius Grambow (Panta Rhei Collaborative)

Panta Rhei Collaborative has investigated water as an urban common in Berlin, London and Zurich. They retraced how vast infrastructure networks, the decentralisation of power, privatisation and artificial shortages have formed residents' experiences of water in the city. The project also features initiatives that have been advocating for the regaining of the commons in urban water politics. The findings of water as urban commons in Berlin ('as repair'), in London ('as power') and in Zurich ('as brand') were presented in an exhibition in May 2023 in Zurich and brought to Floating's Learnscapes Symposium in September 2023.



'WATER WARENESS'
Published by
Pantarheicollaborative
and HumDrumPress (2024)



Image: Rosa Merk

Fountain of Knowledge

INSTALLATION

By Raul Walch and Lisa van Heyden

Unsealing the concrete grounds of Floating, the Fountain of Knowledge is a symbol for great new ideas and bubbling thoughts. It's a space for coming together, taking a bath, refreshing the mind and imagining possible futures within Floating and beyond. All together we open the Midterm with a welcoming inter-action at the Fountain of Knowledge by building paper boats and writing down definitions and interpretations of "Unsealing Floating".



Image: Leon Kläßen

Toasts to the Future

DISCURSIVE DINNER

By Kristin Laz, Markus Bader,
Lisa van Heyden, Benjamin Förster-Baldenius, Raul Walch,
with culinary art by Julia Klink

We invited all participants to engage in conversations about the future we want to proclaim at Floating. We slip into the role of air, earth, rainwater, unsealing, swamping, rewilding, reed, dragonflies and frogs. What does our future look like at Floating? We collectively wrote speeches out of those perspectives and toasted to them.



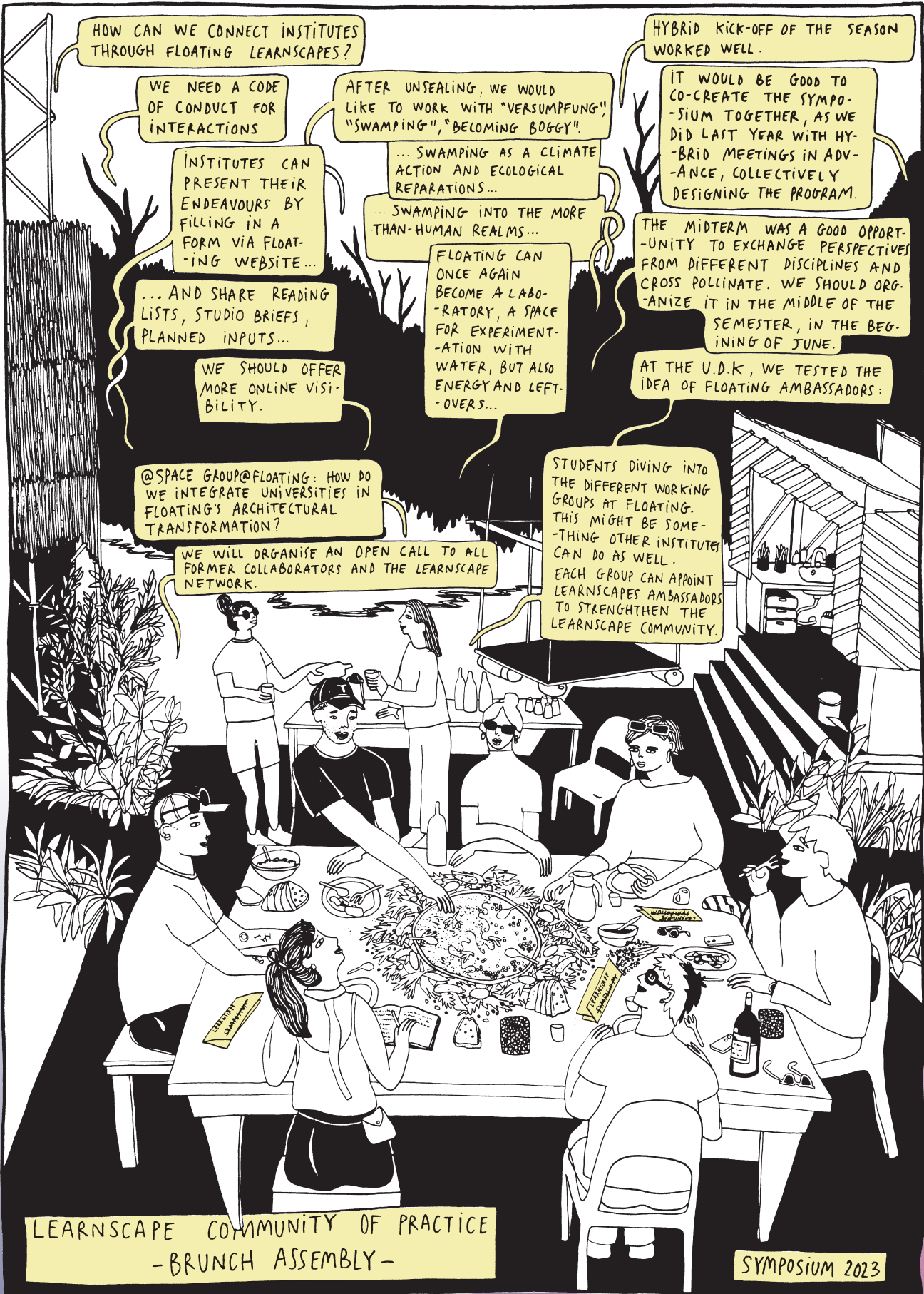
Image: Rosa Merk

After the unsealing comes the swamping. And the next topics of Learnscapes. But what does it actually mean – to become boggy? What possible interpretations, what content is contained in this term? And how can we approach the topic? One possibility is the culinary way: Julia Klink prepared an edible swamp of hummus sand, baba ganoush mud, herb scrub, egg stones and bread rocks. We met for brunch on Sunday morning and talked about the future of Learnscapes.

Which topics would you like to bring next season? What are the common moments next season and what do you expect from those? How can we connect better with each other and with Floating e.V. and strengthen the community of practice?

The Basin as Hydrocommons

Negotiations on ownership, accessibility, distribution and care of the future rainwater infiltration basin in Berlin-Kreuzberg. By Felix Frankowiak, Michael Hindelang, Ariann Schwarz, Elena Valter





1 Neimanis, Astrida (2009), Bodies of Water, Human Rights and the Hydrocommons, *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies*, 21: 161-182, p. 167.



"We need to ask not only whether one has access to water, but who has access to water, and at what cost – financial and otherwise."¹



What if the basin was seen through the lense of hydrocommons including all bodies of water to be involved as equal actors - from microorganisms, insects, mammals, neighbors to political institutions?



When rainwater hits the ground, it is directed into private ownership or managed by city-owned infrastructural sewage systems – depending on to whom a place belongs. Yet, the moment before it touches the floor unfolds its democratizing potential as a hydrocommons. If this potential was considered for the Floating site - which is currently managed by Tempelhof Projekt GmbH and owned by the city of Berlin – who would get access to the water and how might this shape the place as hybrid infrastructure otherwise?



2 Shiva, Vandana (2002) *Water Wars*. Toronto: Between the Lines, p. 127.



"the real solution to the water crisis lies in people's energy, labor, time, care, and solidarity."²



3 Helfrich, Silke (2012): *Gemeingüter sind nicht, sie werden gemacht*. In: Helfrich, Silke/Heinrich-8011-Stiftung (Hrsg.), *Commons: Für eine neue Politik jenseits von Markt und Staat*. Bielefeld: Transcript, p. 85.



We consider water as a commons. The focus thereby does not lie on the material substance of a thing, but on the process of its making, like Silke Helfrich (2012) suggests. She points out that commons "are not, they are made."³ Further, Johannes Euler et al. define commons as a "social form" determined and produced by commoning.⁴



Following Peter Doran (2017), commoning is about making visible what has been enclosed or sealed off from the public. It is about restoring the "deep connection between a community's 'values-intentions' and the connection they can make with a shared resource" which also has the potential to increase the connection between the people involved and the more-than-humans.⁵



4 Euler, Johannes (2018): *Conceptualizing the Commons: Moving Beyond the Goods-based Definition by Introducing the Social Practices of Commoning as Vital Determinant*. In: *Ecological Economics*, 1430, pp. 10-16.




5 Doran, Peter (2017): *A Political economy of attention, mindfulness and consumerism: reclaiming the mindful commons*. London, England und New York, NY, USA: Routledge.




Floating as more than a rainwater retention basin within the city, but a place to negotiate its accessibility and ownership considering different bodies of water.

The essay 'Hydrocommons and Urban Water' explores water management in urban settings, focusing on the rainwater basin in Berlin-Kreuzberg. Drawing from theories by Astrida Neimanis, Vandana Shiva and Erik Swynedouw among others, the authors advocate for viewing water as interconnected entities rather than commodities. They challenge Privatization and commodification, suggesting a shift towards a hydrocommons framework where all stakeholders, human and non-human, are considered equal actors. This perspective prompts discussions on equitable water distribution and usage in the area of the basin but also the surrounding allotment gardens, sport facilities and cemeteries, aiming for a more inclusive and environmentally conscious approach to urban water governance.

The quotes are taken from the Project's booklet by Felix Frankowiak, Michael Hindelang, Ariann Schwarz, Elena Valter for the Chair of Urban Design and Urbanization Institute of Architecture, TU Berlin led by Rosario Talevi, in the summer semester 2023. The seminar was part of the Learnscapes 2023.



The full essay is accessible on our online Repository: floating-berlin.org/the-basin-as-hydro-commons



Dear Garance,

Thank you for taking over and continuing the polylogue which - as you showed - has infinite openings onto different topics and their interpretations. I also would like to thank you, because with your reflections on the *gate* (taken from the quite fashionable and sometimes apparently empty word “to navigate”) you are making me aware that, yes, maybe I idealised the word *door* and its metaphorical articulations too much. If we take its sister word *gate* the discourse immediately shifts and becomes directly political: perhaps by living here and thinking from here - surrounded by mountains and the forest but also by the traces that an old border left in people's lives, traces almost invisible nowadays - we sometimes risk to be blind to today's gates, present borders and stories of contemporary exclusions.

Similarly to the *gate* itself, also the word *navigate* - used widely nowadays to underline a parallel between boats that lightly float over the sea and ourselves who try to stay afloat while keeping a direction in the complexities of our present - opens painful references to the only borders of Europe that aren't concretely closed, the seas, which migrants try to navigate too often losing their lives while trying to reach Europe from the coasts of Africa.

So, yes, again, thank you for pointing out the inherent political meaning of doors, gates and thresholds.

How do we host and welcome people? And how do we welcome a multiplicity of voices within Robida magazine? Robida is itself a multiplicity to the point that it is often difficult for me to name who Robida is – maybe similarly to Floating for you. Robida is the landscape that hosts, we who welcome but also those who visit and comp(h)ost our landscape and thinking. People we share our homes with, guests, temporary dwellers, passers-by have many times the generative and fertilising power over Robida - as compost soil has over gardens.

While welcoming people and new friends, we share the stories of the place, the interesting historical complexities that made the village become what it is today, rather than giving indications of how to use it and approach it. And maybe by sharing the stories and making people feel that they are already participating to them, they start building their own affinities to the village. The Slovene name of the village is Topolove and it is funny how the word itself playfully holds these two elements, that of a space being loved (topo, from greek topos, eng. place + love! – this etymology is wrong, of course! Topolove is etymologically a landscape covered by poplar trees, in Slovene *topol*!), a place where to develop affection through stories of returns, of longer stays and deeper relationships.

For sure, since we are located in a peripheral angle of the world, those who visit us are quite motivated and need less indications of how to be with the site, in comparison maybe to the amount of people that engage with the site, being in the middle of Berlin! Thinking again of gates, yours need to be closed in the evening or when the site is dormant to avoid people entering and doing a mess in the site, while our doors are always unlocked, giving the possibility to each of us to enter the houses of the others also when they are not at home... With this I want just to underline the extreme difference of contexts: and because of this difference some practices could be shared among us, while others would for sure be different! You need to have what you called “welcoming protocols” or protocols in general while we probably don't need them or at least don't have to articulate them openly!

On the other hand, how to host a multiplicity of voices within our publications and how to build them as emanations of the sites where they were conceived and produced is a desire and challenge that we share. At the moment I am reading “Living as a Bird” by Vinciane Despret and while reading about the relation between *birds*, *songs* and *territories* I am thinking about us, *publishing* and *sites*. For birds, songs are manifestations of the territories because they evoke their topography, give the feeling of the soils and the climate, somehow bringing landscapes to life. “The song is the expressive mode through which a sung space takes shape and becomes the bird's body”. The intensity, power and rhythm of the singing “determine the possible extension of what will become territory” for the bird. “The act of territorialization is the act in which space becomes musicalized”.

To make the site transpire through the pages without necessarily describing it, to evoke the landscape which surrounds us, to give a feeling of it, to make it appear between the words, let it transform us and shape the publication – that is what situated publishing is maybe about. How to concretely do this is, I think, a question that the sites themselves in their differences and specificities would offer an answer to. Or maybe this is just me avoiding giving a tangible and applicable answer to what a situated publishing practice could be, because I am still myself on the thresholds of understanding it, looking for a door that would open a clearer, yet still partial, view on it.

Many hugs from a finally sunny Topolò, Vida

continues on p.54

Erde Bäume Pilze Wasser

Floating Kidsuni

Liebe Student*innen der Floating Kidsuni, hier findet ihr eine Sammlung von Stimmen und Geschichten darüber, was die Floating Kidsuni ist und sein kann. Wir schauen zurück auf die spannenden Aktivitäten und Gedanken, die sich rund um das Regenwasserbecken im Jahr 2023 entwickelt haben. Wir möchten kein strenges Thema vorgeben, sondern vielmehr einen Anstoß geben - eine kleine Brille oder Lupe -, durch die ihr die vielfältige Welt der Floating University betrachten könnt. Lasst uns gemeinsam auf Entdeckungsreise gehen!

Text: Anja Fiedler, Jade DreYfuss and Ute Lindenbeck
Collagen: Jade DreYfuss

Kidsuni ist das Programm für junge Entdecker*innen im Regenrückhaltebecken des Tempelhofer Feldes. Kidsuni ist ein Praktisches, ambitioniertes und verrücktes Labor, das stur, verspielt, tiefgründig, vergesslich, improvisiert, konzentriert, seriös und leichtfüßig zugleich ist und es sich zur Aufgabe gemacht hat, Kindern das Tun, Forschen, und Reflektieren zu Stadt, Kunst und Raum zu ermöglichen. Das Publikum ist zu besonderen Momenten eingeladen. Erkenntnisse oder Prozesse werden so dokumentiert, dass sie über den Moment hinaus sichtbar und wahrnehmbar sind, anregen und Aufmerksamkeit erregen. Ziel der Floating Kids ist es, das Engagement von Kindern in künstlerisch-urbanistischen Handlungsfeldern im Floating e.V. kontinuierlich zu manifestieren und im breiteren Diskurs über städtische Praxis sichtbar zu machen.

✧ floating-berlin.org/Programmes/kids-uni

IN DIE ERDE EINTAUCHEN

In einer Handvoll Erde stecken mehr Lebewesen als Menschen auf der Erde. Wie lebt es sich unter der Erde? Schrumpfe in deiner Fantasie auf eine Größe, die du unter der Erde haben willst. Wie groß bist du?

Fast alle Bodenlebewesen können nicht oder schlecht sehen, denn unter der Erde ist es dunkel. Schließe die Augen. Wie fühlt es sich an? Welche Sinne werden stärker? Ein Regenwurm hört auch nicht. Halte dir jetzt Augen und Ohren zu. Mit welchen Sinnen nimmst du jetzt deine Umwelt wahr? Kannst Du über Deine Haut atmen?

Wie bewegst du dich unter der Erde fort? Mit welchen Körperteilen bewegst Du Dich? Kriechst du durch die Erde? Die Erde wird von krümelig weich zu hart. Wie funktioniert deine Fortbewegung jetzt? Endlich regnet es und die Erde wird matschig. Die meisten Bodentiere lieben es feucht und dunkel. Wie findest du das? Was frisst du? Bist du eher eine Kellerassel, die Kacke liebt (auch die eigene) oder schlemmst du lieber verrottes Obst und Gemüse? Beiße mal rein. Und?

Bist du lieber mit vielen zusammen wie Kellerasseln oder Springschwänze oder tummelst du dich lieber alleine im Boden rum? Wie orientierst du dich? Wie nimmst du Gefahren wahr? Hast du Fühler oder nimmst du Vibrationen auf. Fühl nochmal ganz genau in dich hinein.

Dann tauche aus der Erde auf und wachse zur Größe eines Menschen.



KOMPOST THEATER

In der Floating University gibt es eine Vielzahl unterschiedlicher Böden: Schlamm, Kompost-erde, Waldboden und Gartenboden. Diese Böden sind voller Leben und verändern sich, wie können wir das sichtbar machen? Um dieser Frage auf den Grund zu gehen, sammeln wir unterschiedliche Materialien und fertigen Collagen an. Durch diese Collagen entsteht ein einzigartiges Floating Bodentheater. Jedes Material hat seine eigene Geschichte und Dynamik. Durch das Bodentheater können wir die faszinierende Welt unter unseren Füßen erkunden und die Geheimnisse der Böden entdecken.

PRALINEN AUS ERDE
Bodentiere machen unsere Erde locker, bringen Luft hinein und machen sie fruchtbar und unser Essen kann darauf wachsen. Wenn wir Reste von Obst und Gemüse auf den Kompost geben, haben die Bodentiere etwas zu essen und zu verdauen, ein Kreislauf entsteht. Doch leider schmeißen wir viele Überbleibsel in den Restmüll oder in die Biotonne, und die Reste werden verbrannt oder vergoren und es entsteht kein neuer Humus. Können wir Menschen auch Erde essen? Wir machen Torfpralinen aus echtem 2000-jährigem Moor! Moor besteht aus Pflanzen, die unter Luftabschluss in saurem Milieu zu Torf wurden. Ohne Luft gibt es keine Tiere und keine Keime. Deshalb kann man Torf essen. In einem Jahr entsteht 1 mm Moor. Mit etwas Schokolade (20%) wird es zu einer wertvollen, leckeren Delikatesse Moor aux Chocolat. Gerade sind 95% der Moore in Deutschland Weiden und Ackerflächen. Indirekt essen wir deshalb gerade unsere Erde auf.



EINEM BAUM EINE FRAGE STELLEN

Mit jedem Atemzug sind wir mit den Bäumen verbunden. Sie sind eng mit Pilzen und vielen Tieren verknüpft. Es ist ein Geben und Nehmen. Wie kann man einem Baum eine Frage stellen?

Du kannst deine Frage auf ein kleines Stück Papier schreiben und es in der Nähe des Baumes vergraben. Pilze und Zersetzer werden die Frage oder Nachricht weitergeben. Verwende kompostierbares Papier und Graphit, damit die Nachricht vollständig verdaut werden kann.

BAUMSUPPE

Bäume nehmen das Wasser aus der Erde auf, speichern es und verdunsten es, wenn es zu viel ist. Mit einem Stethoskop, das flach auf die Baumrinde gelegt wird, kannst du hören, wie der Baum das Wasser durch den Stamm zieht. Lausche dem Wasser in den Bäumen. Es ist kaum zu hören. Dieses Wasser ist voller Nährstoffe. Im Frühling kannst du Birkenwasser trinken und die Nährstoffe fühlen und schmecken.

Du kannst auch mit Baumholz kochen. Es schmeckt ein wenig nach dem Geruch eines Baumes. Gehe zu einem Baum, rieche daran und stelle dir den Geschmack auf deiner Zunge vor. Kannst du dir vorstellen, wie ein Baum schmeckt?

FLOATING PILZE

Vor zwei Jahren wurden im kleinen Waldgürtel am Wasserbecken einige Bäume gefällt und Äste abgeschnitten. Es kam die Frage auf, was mit dem abgeschnittenen Holz geschehen soll. Die Bodenwissenschaftlerin Martina Kolarek machte den Vorschlag, das abgeschnittene Holz dort zu belassen. Ein Jahr später konnten wir feststellen, dass sich deutlich mehr Pilze in der Floating University ansiedelten. Dies ist auf die Anwesenheit des Totholzes zurückzuführen, das den Pilzen Nahrung bietet und zur Entstehung nährstoffreicher Erde beiträgt.

Pilze sind überall, auch auf uns und in uns drin. Hier sind Vorschläge, wie wir unsere Verflechtung mit Pilzen erfahrbar machen können.

SICH MIT EINEM PILZ VERBINDEN

Lasst uns im Kreis ein Glas Kombucha trinken. Wie schmeckt er und wohin wandert er in deinem Körper? Wie sieht dein innerer Pilz aus? Nennt ein paar Eigenschaften und malt dann gemeinsam den inneren Pilz.

DIE SPRACHE DER PILZE

Pilze senden elektrische Signale aus. In einem Experiment wollen wir testen, wie schnell ein Signal übertragen werden kann. Unsere Versuchsanordnung ist folgendermaßen: Eine Gruppe von Personen bildet einen Kreis und hält sich an den Händen, um eine geschlossene Schaltung zu bilden. Eine Person innerhalb des Kreises beginnt, ein Signal zu senden, indem sie die Hand der Person neben sich drückt. Sobald eine Person das Signal empfängt, sendet sie es sofort mit ihrer anderen Hand an die nächste Person im Kreis weiter. Dieser Prozess setzt sich fort, bis das Signal den gesamten Kreis umrundet hat und zur ersten Person zurückkehrt. Die Zeit, die benötigt wird, um das Signal einmal um den Kreis zu senden, wird gemessen und festgehalten.

EINEM PILZ EINE NACHRICHT GEBEN, DAMIT ER SIE AN EINE PFLANZE ÜBERBRINGT

Es heißt, dass Bäume über ein unsichtbares Netzwerk aus Pilzen miteinander kommunizieren. Doch können wir Menschen auch mittels Pilzen Botschaften an die Pflanzenwelt senden? Um es zu versuchen, schnitz einen langen Satz auf ein Stück Holz, eine Botschaft an die Pflanzen, die das Herz des Waldes sind. Der Satz könnte lauten: „Geliebte Pflanzen, möget ihr gedeihen und eure Schönheit die Welt erhellen.“ Anschließend zerschneide den Satz in einzelne Stücke und umhülle die Enden mit Dingen, die Pilze anziehen: Stroh, Moos und Totholz. Lege dein Geschenk in der Nähe eines Pilzes nieder, in der Hoffnung, dass der Pilz die Botschaft aufnimmt und sie an die Pflanzen weitergibt, durch das unsichtbare Netzwerk, das den Wald durchzieht

Trees of Enlightenment

Jöran Mandik



When I read about the “Bodhi Tree” in Robert Wright’s book “Why Buddhism is True”, lying on the bed in my friend’s apartment, that I was subletting, I started thinking about trees and the role they play in stories of enlightenment. The Bodhi Tree was the tree that Siddharta Gautama (aka the Buddha) sat under meditating until he finally attained enlightenment around 2600 years ago. According to Wikipedia he sat there for 49 consecutive days without moving.

Contemplating this I remembered Isaac Newton, who is said to have had the epiphany that led him to the formulation of his basic principles of physics when an apple with gravity’s aid fell on his head from the tree he was sitting under. Here too, the tree seems to have imparted wisdom on the ponderer.

Many more such stories exist. I called up my extremely well-read stepfather in Hamburg to see if he could think of other examples and learned about the myth of Odin’s search for wisdom. In order to uncover the runes, which hold the secrets of the world and the magical forces that shape it, Odin sacrificed himself. He hung himself off a branch of the great tree Yggdrasil, stabbed himself with a spear and peered down into the Well of Urd, where the runes lay concealed. After nine days and

nights of hanging in the tree, teetering on the edge between life and death, the runes finally revealed themselves bestowing upon Odin their wisdom: “*Then I was fertilized and became wise; I truly grew and thrived.*”

There seems to be something about trees that brings people closer to enlightenment or at least something that triggers people’s imaginaries of trees as truth-portals. At the Floating natureculture-learning site we have both: trees, as well as a desire to gain deeper understanding of things. Perhaps there is a way to tap into the tree wisdom we have on site to help us along the path towards truth and knowledge.

Still with my book in hand I was struck by the impulse to find out more about the Bodhi Tree in particular. Bodhi is a Sanskrit and Pali word meaning “enlightenment” or “awakening”. The original tree was a specimen of the species *figus religiosa*. Colloquially it’s known as the sacred fig - presumably in direct reference to the Buddha’s discovery of nirvana beneath one of them. Their trunks consist of multiple interconnected and interwoven stems, while their frilly-edged leaves are heart shaped with a markedly elongated drip tip, that allows the tree to shed water more quickly, helping to prevent fungal infections and rot. Their fruit - small

figs - are edible. These trees are native to India and Indochina, but have been introduced in many places across the world.

Perhaps, I thought, some of these trees exist here in Berlin too. It seemed like a possible fun excursion to seek one out and see what it’s all about. So, I went online to Berlin’s open data portal, where I knew to exist a dataset of all street and park trees in the city and searched it for *figus religiosas*, hoping (and at least half expecting) to find one near me, that I could go visit. Alas my search did not yield a single hit across the entire data set. An extremely dissatisfying experience and honestly a little disheartening. But I wasn’t ready to give up - surely the data base didn’t actually account for every single tree in Berlin. There had to be some gaps in the data. A little haphazardly I opened a new tab and typed, in German, “Is there a sacred fig in Berlin?” into the search bar.

The very first search result was a Tagesspiegel Potsdam article from 2018 telling the story of a *figus religiosa* cutting that had been brought to Berlin by a Sri Lankan delegation as a present to the local community of the Buddhist House in Frohnau.¹ The article went into more detail, explaining, that this cutting wasn’t taken from just any old sacred fig, but from the famed Sri Maha Bodhi Tree in Sri Lanka. The Sri Maha Bodhi Tree, I found out, is a very old tree, that was grown from a cutting from the original Bodhi tree that the Buddha was meditating under 2600 years ago in India. This tree was planted in Sri Lanka in 236 BC by the buddhist nun and Emperor’s daughter Sangamitta Maha Theri and is still alive today, which makes it the oldest human planted tree on Earth with known planting date. In 2018, a cutting of this tree, a direct to descendant of the very tree that helped the Buddha reach enlightenment, made it to Berlin. After the long flight to Berlin and in the colder climate, the article continues, the small sapling wasn’t doing very well and was brought to the botanical gardens in Potsdam to be nursed back to health. The article ends with the outlook of the tree soon being returned to the Buddhist House. Chances were that by now in 2024 the tree was back there, ready to receive curious visitors like myself. As it happened there was a talk scheduled the next Sunday. I made a plan to take up the opportunity and go to find out.

In the meantime I went back to thinking about the trees we have at Floating. A biodiversity report from 2021 about the rainwater retention basin lists the tree species found here. A translation of the report reads like this: *The east side is dominated by black locust (Robinia pseudacacia), and Norway maple (Acer platanoides) is also prominent. In the northeast, the Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima) stands out. Additionally, there are some large Lombardy poplars (Populus nigra ‘italica’). Alongside the mixed-in English oak (Quercus robur), there are other*

native and non-native species such as wych elm (*Ulmus laevis*), sycamore maple (*Acer pseudo-platanus*), or box elder (*Acer negundo*).

Out of these trees, it seemed to me that the Tree of Heaven might perhaps have the most wisdom to impart. In German it is called “Götterbaum” - tree of the gods. A bit of research quickly revealed however, that the tree has in fact been listed as an invasive species in the EU since 2019. The tree is native to China, extremely hardy and proliferating. It grows very fast too, hurrying skywards with up to 4m per year - giving the *Tree of Heaven* its name.²

During an online talk hosted at Floating in 2023 researcher Bettina Stoetzer spoke about her concept of the ruderal city and called the Tree of Heaven a *ruderal* plant, to describe its ability to thrive in disturbed places, to grow on rubble and even enjoy urban heat islands. Perhaps this tree with its rushed growth isn’t the perfect metaphor for wisdom. But it probably can teach us a thing or two for living on a post-natural planet.

Frohnau is an area full of very big houses. I approached the Buddhist House on foot and found the yellow-painted villa sitting atop a small hill, surrounded by a fence. The hill seemed to be part of a larger property and had lots of trees growing on it. I walked along the side until I found the entrance: a small ornamented stone gate with a wooden door, also ornamented. Behind the gate a long set of stairs waited to lead me in a straight line up to house. Arriving at the top, I found a door. The door was relatively small and not marked at all - no signs of welcome or confirmation of location. Looking around for a while I finally decided to try this door. It opened and I tentatively entered. I found myself in a small vestibule that opened to a larger, carpeted in-between room. Nobody was there or came out to greet me. I could voices coming from a different room. A sign asked me to take of my shoes and swap them for a pair of foam slippers from the wall shelf. I chose an orange pair my size. I was an hour early for the talk and not sure if I was welcome, but I carefully walked towards the voices, into the kitchen. Two people sat facing the door, smiling at me openly. Around the corner, three more people, all of them monks in orange robes sat behind a row of tables. It felt like I was about to enter into a sort of trial. I spoke first, said hello and nervously explained why I was here. Everyone in the room listened. After I finished, one of the monks spoke: “Yes, the tree was here, but only for about a day. Afterwards it was brought to the Botanical Gardens in Steglitz.” So the trip to Frohnau was a bust, but I had a new lead. With almost an hour still to spare before the talk I asked if I could walk around the property for a while, which I was allowed. Behind the house I found a garden,

¹ Source: www.tagesspiegel.de/Potsdam/landeshauptstadt/heilige-figus-pflanzchen-in-Pflege-8012095.html. (Last accessed: 13/03/24)

² Source: <https://berlin.nabu.de/tiere-und-Pflanzen/Pflanzen/neophyten/30281.html#text=Fun> (Last accessed: 13/03/24)

strewn with Buddha figures of different sizes, colours and materials. Behind the garden the property extended into a small forest. I followed the paths through the woods, walking contemplatively and looking at the trees. Indeed, there was no sacred fig to be found here. As I arrived back at the house I noticed that most of the windows were protected by decorative wrought iron gratings featuring heartshaped leafs with elongated tips. My first sight of one of these leaves. It felt like a sign. I went on to attend the lecture on “The Retention of all Impurities”, which went a bit deeper into Buddhist philosophy than I would have liked. I took some notes anyway.

Soon after this excursion I contacted the Botanical Gardens in Steglitz, this time emailing ahead with my query. The gardens’ press speaker emailed back with good news: “According to my research, there are a total of three specimens in our Large Tropical House.” It was confirmed - there are at least three sacred figs in Berlin. An hour later someone else emailed me back to add, that according to their database, none of these three specimen, had their origin in Sri Lanka. I’d found real trees and that’s a step up from iron window grates. Naturally however, after having found out about the baby Bodhi Tree that came from Sri Lanka I could no longer be satisfied with finding just any old sacred fig tree. Now it had to be the Bodhi Tree. So I didn’t make the journey to Steglitz. Instead I started thinking that perhaps the monks hadn’t told me the truth. I remembered the 2018 article, which only spoke of the Botanical Gardens of the Potsdam University, not the ones in Steglitz and went back online for more research. Another newspaper’s article came up which told the same story but also mentioned a man called Dr. Michael Burkart, research lead at the Botanical Gardens in Potsdam, who had been involved in receiving the tree in need of nursing. A quick visit to the garden’s “Contact” page let me know, that Dr. Burkart still worked there. Above his was a small low quality picture of him. In the picture Dr. Burkart had slicked back graying hair, no-rim glasses, a simple light blue shirt unbuttoned at the top and healthy looking reddened cheeks. Beneath the name the website listed a phone number and email address. I sent an email. Dr. Burkart emailed me back right away, saying: “Indeed, the Bodhi tree you speak of is located in our Botanical Garden. You are welcome to come and see it.”

The next chance I got, I rented a car and drove down to Potsdam. I was excited and brought my friend along for the day trip. She had had a big night but was in good spirits and took over car-DJ duties - karaoke hits only. Arriving at the gardens we realised that it might be a bit of a challenge to find this tree. It’s a big garden and Dr. Burkart had added a line at the end of his email saying: “We have unfortunately not yet labeled this outstanding specimen adequately according to its history. But we will catch up on that soon.” He also hadn’t got back to me when I asked the exact whereabouts

of the tree. It was up to us to find it. Remembering, that the three trees in Steglitz were kept inside their Tropical House it seemed fair to assume the same to be true here. We walked up to the big glass greenhouse and entered. At the entrance booth I asked the young person selling the tickets (2€ for adults- great price) about the tree. They seemed to have no idea what I was talking about and also didn’t have access to the data bank to check. They couldn’t tell us where this tree was located or if it was even on display. We preceded to walk from one of the interconnected greenhouses to the next, saw loads of beautiful ferns, palms, cacti and tropical plants, but couldn’t find the *ficus religiosa* we were after. I was beginning to wonder if we’d be able to find it at all. Perhaps I’d have to re-approach the ticket booth to try and somehow push for more information. Instead my friend and I decided to take a break. We bought a bottle of Sinalco Cola from the vending machine (2€, again a good price) to drink beneath the cola tree we had come across a few rooms earlier. With the cola in hand I followed my friend into the adjacent room. To my left I noticed a very small tree with frilly edged heart shaped leaves with elongated drip tips growing in a big planter. With my eyes I traced the tree down its entangled trunk and found sitting at its foot a small black buddha statue. I excitedly hurried around the front of the planter and in the dirt next to it the statue found a white tag that read: “*Ficus religiosa*. Bodhi Tree. India, Sri Lanka”. We found it. This little unassuming tree really was the cutting from the Sri Maha Bodhi tree in Sri Lanka. I wanted to really let the moment land. This tree connected us standing there in front of it directly to the Buddha, who sat under a tree in India 2600 years ago. We decided to sit down on the ground beneath the tree, closed our eyes and meditated for a few minutes. It was quite embarrassing, but it felt the right thing to do. Before leaving I found some half composted fallen leaves at the bottom of the tree and took a couple with me.

Considering the contextual significance of this tree, I found it hard to understand that it was such a journey to even find out about it, let alone find it. This little baby tree in a greenhouse in Potsdam seemed to me a legitimate pilgrimage site, that barely anyone knew about.

One day while writing this I meditated picturing myself as a tree: strong, rooted, unhurried and still, while life was going on all around me: squirrels climbing me, dogs peeing on me, woodpeckers pecking at me. It was a very grounding exercise. I thought about the people in my life who have been alive for long times. By and large they seem to be less hurried and more rooted. Trees grow to be much older than people. Perhaps this different time scale trees exist in and their rootedness give them that air of wisdom, that has been inspiring people through the ages.

On another recent venture onto Berlin’s Open Data Portal, I looked at the trees in my own street. To me they never seemed anything special - not

especially old or big or of any rare species. But the data base told me, that the one I look at from my balcony, standing kitty-corner from my apartment was planted there 133 years ago. This meant that this tree outside my window had lived through all of the important events of recent German history that I learned about in school - Reunification, East-West division, the Second World War, the Weimar Republic, the First World War, Gründerzeit... This tree was right here for all of it. It has seen Berlin grow up around it, it’s seen the city bombed, rebuilt, divided, reunified and gentrified. And to me, who has been alive since 1990, it didn’t even seem like a special tree. How wrong I was. Even the younger trees around my house have been here the entire time I have been alive. Trees are amazing witnesses. It’s no wonder, that enlightenment strikes when sitting beneath them.

Now, did I become wise running around Berlin in search of the Bodhi Tree? No, I cannot say I’ve found my own enlightenment just yet. But what I’ve learned is this: sometimes you gotta stop for a cola and take a breather to find what you’re looking for.

At Floating we do not only have the trees that surround the basin. We also have the young willows inside the basin, who have witnessed our activities on site since 2018 and who have already gone through some drastic and traumatic disturbance when the reed bed was destroyed in March 2023. They will continue to witness the transformation of the basin. They will be wise and still watching when we’re all long gone. Hopefully some of their budding wisdom will rub off on us in the time we are busying ourselves on site. As for the Bodhi tree: the dead leaves I collected are still with me. Come spring I will put them in the ground at Floating, merging them with our soil. May wisdom grow from them.

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and how often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, “Stay awhile.”
The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, “It’s simple,” they say,
“and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine.”

When I Am Among the Trees
by Mary Oliver

Jöran Mandik (he/him/theY) is an urban designer and researcher as well as a facilitator, cultural Producer and story teller. He has been active as an urban Practitioner since 2017 working at the intersection of art, urbanism, research and education as a member of Floating e.V., Urbane Praxis e.V. and the action-research Project Making Futures Bauhaus+ (Berlin University of the Arts and raumlaborberlin). As a Producer for Floating e.V. he is actively involved with many of Floating's activities and is contributing his own Programs as well. His stories describe something between everyday encounters, various curiosities and wikipedia wormholes.

What do
you do there?

At Floating University, the air is thick with magic as we conjure cultural programs that transcend boundaries of discipline and convention. Engage in workshops that weave spells of enlightenment, partake in culinary alchemy, or lose yourself in the enchanting tales spun during our mesmerizing reading sessions.

What is Floating?

Floating University Berlin is a magical haven where the whispers of nature intertwine with the dreams of humanity. Nestled upon the mystical rainwater retention basin of the former Tempelhof Airfield, it serves as a sanctuary for ecology, social equity, and the boundless imagination of city dwellers. Behold, as reeds sway in harmony with the wind, and foxes dance under the moonlit sky, transforming this basin into a vibrant wetland and lake ecosystem.

Who is Floating?

Floating University is not merely an entity but a convergence of souls seeking to sculpt a future imbued with enchantment and wisdom. Led by the illustrious Floating e.V., an association pulsating with the energies of around 60 visionaries, it stands as a beacon of collaboration, co-creation, and fantastical exploration.

Where is Floating?

Embark on a whimsical journey to discover Floating University, nestled within the heart of Berlin-Kreuzberg, where Lilienthalstraße 32 beckons you to traverse realms both tangible and ethereal.

How are
you financed?

With a sprinkle of fairy dust and the support of the cultural sector, Floating was able to thrive for the last 5 years. Tragically, the stars didn't align in such manner this year and Floating must look elsewhere to stay afloat... or wait until the financial winds blow in its favor again!

Frequently Asked Questions

Who owns
this place?

While the city of Berlin may claim ownership, and the Tempelhof Projekt GmbH holds responsibility it is the guardians of Floating e.V. who tenderly nurture and protect this enchanted sanctuary, ensuring its preservation for generations to come.

What do you want
to achieve with the
project?

Our quest is grand and noble—to weave a tapestry of social and ecological harmony, to illuminate the path towards a future where magic and reality intertwine seamlessly.

But is it floating?
And do people
live here?

Ah, the age-old question! While our spirits soar amidst the clouds of imagination, alas, our earthly abode remains firmly grounded. As for dwelling amongst the wonders of Floating—while foxes and frogs may call this enchanted realm home, human habitation awaits in the realms beyond.

Is the place
barrier-free?

Indeed, Floating is accessible to all, yet the sometimes steep slopes and steps to some areas make it difficult to enter completely autonomously. Its pathways paved with stardust and its gates open wide to embrace seekers of every hue and creed. Venture forth, for adventure awaits!

What is this place?

Behold the rainwater retention basin, a living conduit between the mundane and the mystical, collecting the tears of the heavens before guiding them on their celestial journey through the Landwehr canal into the river Spree.

How can I
get involved?

Fear not, dear traveler, for all are welcome to partake in our mystical gatherings and wondrous adventures! Reach out to us through the ethereal realms of emails or drop by to join us as we embark on our enchanting quest.

Fragments of Waterfront Conversations

Perspectives from eco-logical Zones of Struggle

*How can we shape the future
of the planet out of an activist-
artistic-academic practice?*

*How can we confront climate
change based on the hopes
and struggles of the most
affected communities?*

*How can we address profound
ecological interconnectedness
within contexts marked by
persistent injustice, daily
unpredictability, and rapid
urban transformation?*

Two years ago an exchange started, to approach these questions through a process of circulating, sharing and collective framing amongst riparian zones of struggle, between transdisciplinary activists, artists and academics. Confronted with degraded landscapes, toxic legacies of urbanization, resource exploitation and historical injustices as sedimented in our city waterways and riparian ecosystems, we've collaboratively devised tactics and objects for planetary healing. Together, we've established an infrastructure for mutual learning and solidarity between Labtek Apung from Jakarta, Ground Atlas and Salve Saracura from São Paulo and Floating University Berlin.

This is an interim gathering of voices amassed during intense correspondences, travels of river denizens and inhabitants of struggle zones...

The interviews were conducted, translated and edited in October 2023, in São Paulo, Brazil by Silja Teresa Huppertz and Ute Lindenbeck, Laura Kemmer and Azri Pessoa Alvim.

During the encounter for the workshop and symposium "De-Saracura/Reading the Sediments", organized by Laura Kemmer with Ana Luiza Nobre and David Sperling and financed by the DAAD with funds from the German Federal Foreign Office.

The Call for Projects with the Questions above was launched by Kenny CuPers and Laura Nikola-Wenz as part of the "South Designs Initiative" (Swiss National Science Foundation funding).

The Project: Designing with the Planet. Connecting riparian zones of struggle in São Paulo, Jakarta, and Berlin was initiated and coordinated by Jamie Baxter and Laura Kemmer.

Silja Teresa Huppertz, Ute Lindenbeck, Garance Maurer are part of this project, representing Floating e.V.



Analogue images: Silja Teresa Huppertz

Rosseline Tavares,
BAIXADA DO GLICÉRIO VIVA:

*Intertwined with the stories
of those who came before me*

Here in São Paulo, a city often seen as disconnected from nature, an intriguing paradox emerges: beneath the urban fabric lies a vital natural ecosystem essential to our existence. Despite the city's efforts to conceal it, the presence of rivers and their impacts on our lives remains undeniable.

The Glicério neighborhood in Liberdade, once a vibrant riverside community, now bears the scars of urbanization. Yet the river's spirit persists, silently urging us to reconsider our relationship with these waters. It beckons us to reflect critically on our presence here and contemplate the possibilities inherent in this territory. These rivers, in their proximity to São Paulo, have sparked a dialogue within me about the possibilities that exist in this city.

As a woman from Manaus, my perspective on São Paulo is colored by my origins and experiences. This bustling metropolis, like any other, is a melting pot of diverse cultures and identities, each vying for recognition and validation. It's a constant negotiation between right and wrong, possibility and impossibility.

My heritage imbues my professional endeavors with a unique sensitivity. I think of Madrinha Eunice, a symbol of resilience and strength, navigating the challenges of São Paulo's samba scene in the 1930s. I'm reminded of the countless women researchers who've walked these streets before me, carving out their paths in pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

In essence, my journey in São Paulo is intertwined with the stories of those who came before me, urging me to navigate the complexities of this city with empathy, resilience, and a deep appreciation for the interconnectedness of our shared humanity.



Rafael Funari,
SALVE SARACURA:

The river as a living element

It's very important to understand the river as a living element in Bixiga, even though it flows underground today. Identifying the river is crucial because there exists a symbiotic relationship between nature and culture in Bixiga. Three distinct rivers in the area have shaped the landscape, influencing the territorial occupation and leaving indelible marks on the community and its collective memory.

The proposed construction of a big building in the spring area of the Saracura River prompted Salve Saracura's formation in 2019, aiming to protect the riparian ecology here. For this territory, two Brazilian legal protection laws apply: the Forest Code mandates the preservation of spring areas within a 50-meter radius, even within consolidated urban areas like Bixiga. While the Municipal Preservation Act safeguards the neighborhood's buildings, landscapes, and ways of life.

Through these legal frameworks, efforts are underway to protect Bixiga, particularly the primary water sources of the Saracura River. In partnership with other associations, organizations, and collectives in the neighborhood, we strive for the preservation of the river in its geographical, ecological, and artistic-cultural dimensions. This is an alliance that, far from being an apology for an idyllic past of São Paulo, seeks to activate political, cultural, and urban creativity, thus allowing new desires and new landscapes to overflow into the imagination of the Saracura riparian zone and the whole city.

Victor Próspero,
SALVE SARACURA:

*The Samba School Vai-Vai was more
than just a place for practicing samba*

One of the distinctive features of the Salve Saracura collective is its horizontal decision-making process. Meetings are announced in a WhatsApp group comprising approximately 70 members. These meetings serve as open forums where discussions take place, and decisions are made collectively. Certain technical requirements, such as the need to draft legal documents, prompted the formation of smaller working groups. It's very organic in this sense, it always varies a bit. Members contribute their time and expertise based on their availability, balancing their commitments to work, personal life, and volunteer activities.

Salve Saracura and the Saracura Vai-Vai movement have joined forces to preserve the rich history and cultural heritage of the Quilombo in Bixiga, with a particular focus on the significance of the Saracura river. At Salve Saracura, we knew that there would be archaeological findings of the Quilombo once they start the construction of a new Metro Station, but we were just some white academic guys. The demolition of the Samba School Vai-Vai's headquarters during the pandemic served as a catalyst for action, prompting both groups to unite in their preservation efforts.

Saracura Vaivai is made by the community, research-

ers, and specially by the Black movement, concerned with afro-brazilian heritage preservation. A central goal of this movement is the establishment of a museum and memorial dedicated to the Quilombo, where the archaeological artifacts should be kept, and advocating for permanence policies for the black community in Bixiga. This initiative aims to provide a space for archival documentation while ensuring that it remains dynamic and reflective of lived experiences. The Samba School Vai-Vai was more than just a place for practicing samba; it served as a social hub where people used to prepare Feijoada on Saturdays, and where children mingled with the elderly, engaging in conversations about the Saracura river. Therefore, I believe that addressing this challenge entails advocating for new strategies in establishing a cultural institution and addressing the community's demands effectively.

Solange Lisboa,
SALVE SARACURA:

*Embroidery is a constant presence -
an autobiographical reflection
of the world I inhabit*

I don't consider myself an expert in history, although I've always been engaged with it to some extent. Additionally, I find solace in embroidery; it's a daily practice for me, almost like keeping a diary. And politics is present at all times. From mundane activities like caring for plants to more overtly political matters, embroidery is a constant presence, almost like an autobiographical reflection of the world I inhabit. I can't pinpoint exactly when this perspective took root; it's just become an integral part of who I am.

I'm a member of the Salve Saracura, a group of individuals that I wouldn't classify as a collective per se. We wanted to draw attention to ourselves inspired by the tradition of “estandarte” in Pernambuco. In this tradition, various cultural groups like maracatu, samba schools, and blocos display banners or flags during their parades. While I've created many “estandartes”, reinventing the concept without fully understanding its traditional roots, I've come to appreciate its significance. However, my interpretation diverges from the traditional approach, focusing more on storytelling than adherence to convention. That's precisely why I'm passionate about crafting these banners. I've created numerous flags, each telling its own unique story.

Romilda Correia,
MULHERES UNIDAS VENCEREMOS;
VIVEIRO COMUNITÁRIO DENUZIA PEDREIRA:

*And then the place was abandoned.
And then we came and took over*

With the Viveiro garden it was like this. At the Salve Saracura collective, we always held meetings, we were all over the place. We met at Solange's house, at the bookshop, at Julia's, at Augusto's, anywhere where we found a place. And Denuzia and me, we were always there, attending.

And one day, we were all together, talking about a community garden. We wanted a community garden,

but we did not know how to do it. So we said, let's do it in the street, at the street corner.

And then I remembered about this place here. Then I said, “Guys, there's a good place, right? And I know who's in charge.” So I went to search for Paulo. And one day I met him at the lottery. I said, “Paulo, I need to talk to you”. I said to him, “do you remember about that place, that little vegetable garden in that backyard that is almost abandoned?”. Because it was like this, that place was a place of the children before, it belonged to another association called Novo Olhar.

But it was the children before who took care of this place. The children who planted, the children who came, they made everything here.

And then the place was abandoned. And then we came and took over. And we're here, right? It was open, go. A community garden is for everyone, it's for the whole neighborhood, isn't it? That's why it's called a community garden, it's my people who come here to get tea and herbs, like cilantro, or mint. And today we will organize a workshop with the children, so that this can become a space of the children again.

Jacinto Donizeti,
VIVEIRO COMUNITÁRIO DENUZIA PEDREIRA:

*Everyone has
an ancestral knowledge*

We are starting this process of identifying and documenting knowledge about the plants we have in this garden. The names, how they are called et cetera. And this is also due to our approximation to the local Unidade Básica de Saúde, to Lucas who works there, and he is a biologist. So he came here on Fridays and helped us to elaborate this catalog of the plants, this identification, so we can translate it and share it with the people who come here.

And then when at home, the people can deepen their knowledge about the plants, search for more information on the internet. So today this partnership with the public health institutions is a lot about generating trust. Because they have their hierarchies, they represent public institutions. So their interests and our interests have to match. We understand that because they represent institutions that are focused on questions of health, and they have an interest in plants that are also medicinal. And we don't have that systematic knowledge about how to make use of these plants, maybe these institutions have because they have scientific knowledge, but our Denuzia, she wanted this, she wanted to have a proof for what she already knew about the medicinal plants. So maybe it is a good moment to create a space for phytotherapy here together with these institutions, so that we can base on this kind of knowledge the things we are actually already doing.

How do I prepare a tea from Terramicina - Alternanthera dentata, in which situations should I take it, when should I not take it, what is the dosage? Before, Denuzia gave us this kind of knowledge, based on the ancestral knowledge she had about the plants here. Everyone has this ancestral knowledge, but for this knowledge to become more “true”, we can mobilize these public health institutions.



Vera Campos:
MOBILIZAÇÃO SARACURA VAI-VAI;
CCBIX COLETIVO CULTURAL BIXIGA:

Bring the neighborhood closer to us

With the neighbors it is like this, you see? So they don't know us well enough, they don't really know what we do, and neither do we know them well enough. So one of the proposals of the CCBIX in the Bixiga neighborhood is to bring the neighborhood closer to us, to generate proximity between us and the neighbors. Doing things, actions and events that bring the people of the neighbourhood closer together. To foster a collective awareness for the preservation of this neighborhood, of its culture, its street life. When we opened CCBIX last year, we sent out a circular to the neighbours. To attract people's attention, we created the parklet here in the street.

There are some houses in the neighbourhood that are a little deteriorated, and the only thing you can't touch is the facade, to maintain the original design and because these buildings are listed by the Condephaat, which protects them from danger and the power of real estate developers.

Joana Martins:
GROUND ATLAS:

Letters to the Saracura River

This workshop held in São Paulo centered around the Saracura River, culminating in the collaborative creation of a new constellation for the Ground Atlas project. The Ground Atlas is a counter cartography project featuring geographical points of interest alongside textual and visual content, encompassing a diverse array of academic, personal, and artistic perspectives.

In crafting this constellation, our approach was to compose letters addressed to the Saracura River and create something more personal and poetic. We sought to navigate the challenge of integrating various cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and collective experiences throughout the workshop. The act of writing these letters served as a means of communication and connection, allowing us to articulate our thoughts and experiences while fostering dialogue and understanding among participants.

In the children's group we recorded their emotional connections to the river, which we then transcribed into letters. This initiative not only provided a platform for the children to express themselves but also allowed us to capture their unique perspectives.

The intercontinental exchange involving children from Jakarta, the Floating University, and São Paulo added a rich layer to our project. There were already some activities with children organized by Carla (Lombardo) and Ж but this marked the first dedicated exploration of the river's significance. For children, grasping the concept of an underground river can be challenging. To bridge this understanding gap, Ж, Carla, and Rapha devised a narrative about a drum used to awaken the river. This storytelling served as a catalyst for engaging with the river, urging its nourishment and awakening. In essence, it transformed the river from a mere geographical feature into a living entity, one that can be communicated with. So it was a ludic way to view and to map with children.

JOHANNES-CHRISTOPH

Stefan Shankland: Could you say that Floating University is “post-disciplinary” – intersecting Ecology, Art & Urbanism?

Benjamin Foerster-Baldenius: The question that initially prompted Floating University is fundamentally “post-disciplinary”: how do we train ourselves – “we” architects, artists, students, teachers, citizens, etc. – to practice in the wake of the ecological, social, cultural and urban challenges of our times? Our approach was to situate this question in a specific location and to get down to work on it collectively. The rainwater reservoir of the Tempelhof airport in which we located Floating University sits at the intersection of a set of problems, conflicts, contradictions and complexities that are specific to our contemporary cities: an infrastructural, polluted site, taken over by nature, managed by locals, coveted by urban developers, used as an experimental playground for educational and transdisciplinary art practices ...

We worked with what was already there, with the people who were interested in this situation, with our different tools, methods and motivations, our diverse networks and educational institutions.

Looking at Floating University today, it has become impossible to say what belongs to the realm of art practice, design practices, social practice, ecological practice... We use the term urban practice to name what we do here. The site, the people who are taking part in the project, what we practice, the effects that this has on us individually and the implication of our collective work on the wider context, are all intrinsically connected.

Post-disciplinarity could also be a good concept to account for what is happening here. Following his visit to Floating University in 2018 Bruno Latour described the situation as “truly terrestrial”. Could “Terrestrial” be another way of naming the intersection of Ecology, Art & Urbanism?

Stefan Shankland is a visual artist from Ivry-sur-Seine. He is a good friend and companion of raumlabor, not least because he is a pioneer of urban practice as we understand it. A practice that is artistic, experimental and orientated towards the common good. He visited the Floating University three times with his students from ENSA Nantes and repeatedly pointed out important principles of the work at the Floating. In January 2024, we met to talk about the floating as an example of a place that lies in the triangle between art, ecology and urbanism for a small book project on postdisciplinarity.

Benjamin Foerster-Baldenius is a member of raumlaborberlin and retired chairman of the floating association, which he represented from 2019–2024. He is still active member of the learnscape and lobbygroup. He directed numerous programs within the rainwaterbasin-basin including *Floating University 2018*, *Extradisciplinary*, *ReDO cate me!* and *Cross-Pollinate me!*. He is Professor for Cohabitation at Städelschule University of Arts Frankfurt.

Letters
from reeeder's!
Do You reeeeed us? Tell us!



Leeeser*innen-
briefe!
Leeeeeest ihr uns? Teilt es mit uns!

A selection of submitted letters will be published in the next issue. We look forward to receiving your thoughts, comments, drawings (...)! Contact us via reeder@floating-berlin.org or go to Lilienthalstrasse 32 and leave your letter in the black postbox in front of Floating!

Eine Auswahl der eingereichten Leser*innenbriefen werden wir in der nächsten Ausgabe veröffentlichen. Wir freuen uns auf eure Gedanken, Kommentare, Zeichnungen, (...)! Kontaktiert uns via reeder@floating-berlin.org oder geht zur Lilienthalstraße 32, und werft euren Brief in den am Tor befestigten schwarzen Briefkasten!

Best of Bar
Charts 2019–2023
by Hannah Lu Verse

#1
ALMA, CORAZÓN Y VIDA²⁰¹⁹
Frankie Reyes

#2
IT'S MY HOUSE²⁰²⁰
Diana Ross

#3
上を向いて歩こう²⁰²¹
Kyu Sakamoto

#4
SUR LA PLANCHE²⁰¹³
La Femme

#5
SÜPÜRGESİ YONCADAN²⁰²³
Altın Gün

Hannah Lu Verse is an editor and PhotoGraPher based in Berlin and Amsterdam. Her work focuses on caring infrastructures, hostinG and hosPitalitY. She is Part of an activist housinG Project in Am-sterdam and foundinG member of artist GrouP 'dustY'.

CHAT ON SITE



Lösungen für das Worträtsel (S.43)
Solutions for the word Puzzle (P.43)

THE CONTAINER GODS



WORK IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

15:31
TURN THE TWO HANDLES
TOWARDS EACH OTHER
AT THE SAME TIME

15:26
HEY IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO
CLOSE THE CONTAINER,
ARE THERE ANY CLUES?

15:33
CLOSE THE DOOR WITH THE HANDS
POINTING TOWARD YOU. THEN ROTATE
THEM POINTING EACH OTHER AT THE
SAME TIME

15:35
THANKS YES IN THEORY I KNOW
HOW IT WORKS , BUT IT'S TOO
HEAVY

16:19
HI K, IT IS HEAVY I WAS
SUCCESSFULL ONCE WHEN TURNING
ONE AFTER THE OTHER INTO THE
MIDDLE. NOT BOTH AT THE SAME TIME.

16:21
I THINK MOST IMPORTANT IS TO START
WITH TWO ARMS BOTH HALF TURNED IN,
LIKE A. SAYS, POINTING TOWARDS YOU.
THEN PUSH DOOR CLOSED. THEN MOVE THEM
THE REST OF THE WAY.

16:24
ALSO HELPS IF YOU DO SOME RITUALS
AND OFFER A HUMAN SACRIFICE TO
THE CONTAINER GODS.
BUT NOTHING IS CERTAIN.
THEY WORK IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS.

5/5, Madrid, 18.03.2024

Dear Vida,
Reading over our correspondence I read about words that describe objects that became symbols: doors, gates, floating boats and navigation tools. I read about landscapes and places that re-de-materialise into words, I read about the violence of political borders and the enigmatic of sung territories, about books that inspire us to read and write some more.
Since we mentioned *porte-paroles*, *doors* and *gates*, I continue with another metaphor, which doesn't have the pretension to serve as a tool to understand the world around us, which is not so poetic, but which comes to my mind often. That is, I often think of discussions as a collection of *drawers* — *drawers* be-holding thoughts and ideas that one pulls open while discussing, and rarely closes.
Naturally when telling a story or answering a question, we open one drawer after the next, fetching the ideas, details and thoughts they contain, slowly deviating from the topic that initially sparked the exchange, leaving half-formulated thoughts in the air for someone else to catch...
I imagine all the drawers left open after an animated discussion (especially between friends or passionate people) and all the ideas lying messily on the ground around them like pieces of clothes in one's room, or leaves and branches after a summer storm, left there to compost and serve as unconscious matter for future discussions.
So without trying to answer any of the questions that ap-peared in our exchange, I will leave all drawers open as they are and simply thank you for sharing your thoughts with us, as I think unfinished discussions are the most honest, and good discus-sions impossible to finish anyway.
Hopefully see you very soon,
many hugs, Jeanne

Vida Rucli is an architect and cul-tural worker based in the villa9e of ToPolò, situated on the borderland between Italy and Slovenia. Vida is a foundinG member of Robida – a collec-tive that works at the intersection of written and sPoken words and sPatial Practices. She is editor of Robida MaGazine (2014–) and curator for Ro-bida's Public ProGrammes and Projects (2017–).



Robida 09 Suolo Prst Soil
(december 2023)

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To all the builders, caretakers, gardeners, trash collectors, cooks ... that joined us during this Year's 'Build+Care+RePair' week from April 22nd-28th and worked through rain and snow to PrePare the Floating site for this summer! Without all the voluntary work from our community and our association members Floating University could not exist. We also esPecially thank Gerüstbau Tisch GmbH for enablinG us to walk on the water since 2018.

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54

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55

