

Conviviality After Landscape

3 + 4 September 2026

Research Unit 5710 Infrastructure: Aesthetics and Supply

Project 1 Hollowed-out Landscapes

3 September: 14:00 – 20:00

4 September: 10:00 – 16:30

Künstler*innenhaus Dortmund, Sunderweg 1, Dortmund

With:

Yasmeen Al-Qaisi (Berlin)

Claudia Bosse (Stockholm University of the Arts)

Club Real (Berlin/Vienna)

Sandra Jasper (Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg)

Marijke Lukowicz (University of Münster)

Sam Nightingale (Ruhr University Bochum)

Christina Pinsdorf (University of Bonn)

Maria Cecília Rocha (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil)

Carlina Rossée (Max Planck Institute of Geoanthropology Jena)

Jörn Etzold (Ruhr University Bochum)

Jana Kerima Stolzer (Ruhr University Bochum)

Mining, industrialisation and monoculture have had a pervasive impact on living environments and communities on a global scale. Since the late 1950s, conventional coal mining in Europe has gradually come to an end. The remaining active mining areas are set to close within the next decade. The aftermath leaves behind places whose aesthetic conveys the passing of an era of prosperity. However, these places are also characterized by degraded soils, decaying infrastructure, and contaminated areas. In the Ruhr region, the transformation process began at an early stage, 'reprogramming' these places, as Rem Koolhaas put it. The transformation of the remains into a cultural landscape, achieved by converting old mines into museums and theatres, as well as venues for the service sector, was intended to foster a sense of pride and identity in the region, while also attracting a new labour force. Where this process is delayed by contaminated land, however, unique ecosystems emerge whose flora and fauna have adapted to the often heavy-metal-laden soils. In such contexts, the concept of 'landscape' as an aesthetic category becomes obsolete, highlighting the need for innovative and resilient forms of coexistence and solidarity. These places are characterised by loss, yet they also stimulate contemplation of an alternative mode of coexistence.

Taking place at the Künstler*innenhaus Dortmund, a former pithead building at the Westphalia coal mine and part of the operational infrastructure of the mining industry, the symposium invites participants to reflect on the possibilities for cross-disciplinary collaboration and participation offered by an environment shaped by extraction. Within the framework of the concurrent exhibition project *Unheimliche Verschiebungen* by Urbane Künste Ruhr, the symposium will facilitate interdisciplinary discussions on the potential of industrialised landscapes, particularly those affected by past use and awaiting redevelopment.

The symposium will explore artistic research and participatory approaches interwoven with theoretical research. Can a landscape devastated by industrialisation ever become a place of solidarity, rather than conforming to the Romantic conception of nature? Could the transformation from an industrial landscape to a cultural landscape occur without reproducing extractivist patterns of thought and action? We will consider what we can learn from new ecosystems on brownfield sites and what rights we must grant to nature and its non-human agents after anthropogenic destruction and 'un-landscaping'.

3.9.26

welcome 14:00

14:30

Sandra Jasper

Wastelands as experimental fields

Wastelands are spaces of botanical discovery and collective memory. Ruins, former infrastructures, abandoned military sites, extractive zones, and other wasteland spaces have produced a profusion of plants and animals, and have afforded a place for more-than-human life in the conception of urban spaces' inhabitation. In his talk, I will trace the histories, contemporary forms, and prospective futures of wasteland spaces across various sites, including Berlin and Luxembourg. I will discuss different responses to wasteland spaces from early geobotanical studies to more recent scientific and artistic engagements with these experimental ecologies. I will conclude by questioning the efficacy of current nature conservation policies to counter the rapid loss of these seemingly vacant sites in the context of speculative urban development.

15:30

Club Real

Lonely at the top? - from autocracy to a multi-species society

Organisms democracy is a social, artistic and cultural practice which, within a specific ecosystem, aims to ensure the representation of all species, democratic debate and decision-making, and a meaningful distribution of power amongst all living beings. Since 2018 it has been implemented by the artist group Club Real in field trials in Vienna, Berlin, Augsburg, Leipzig, Gelsenkirchen, Münster and Frankfurt (Main).

Special Guest: ASF Virus (Ambassador)

coffee break 16:30

17:00

Marijke Lukowicz

Who Owns the River Landscape? The Emscherkunstweg as a Format of Appropriation

The Emscherkunstweg brings art into a landscape shaped by mining, industry, and open sewage systems. This permanent collection of art in public space creates new sites of identification there — for local residents as much as for visitors from elsewhere. But who, in the process, is actually appropriating this landscape? The talk examines the Emscherkunstweg as a curatorial format at the intersection of artistic intervention and regional structural policy, situating the project as a whole within the context of comparable formats in post-industrial landscapes.

Claudia Bosse

An applied logbook of landscape encounters, topologies and methods, and perhaps even cosmologies

This logbook provides insights into various landscape encounters and artistic strategies, ranging from the spontaneous to the long-term, and from embodied practices to more-than-social relations, between wastelands, wounded landscapes and industrial sites. A key focal point of these encounters is on the sensual exploration of the relationship between the body and a landscape or a particular detail within it. These encounters are also meditations on movement relating to the environment as a 'patchy' landscape composed of various living constellations, elements, forces, and traces of human intervention.

The presentation will unveil what was witnessed, encountered and explored, and share some methods and doubts that emerged during the process. It will include the artistic project WASTELAND dreams - a chronicle on choreographic ground with theatercombinat. The presentation will seek to apply planetary thinking and navigate through epistemological clashes. These landscape encounters form part of Claudia Bosse's PhD research, *Hybrid Landscapes: Research on Rituals, Bodies, Knowledge, Virtuality as an Ecology with Landscapes and Wounded Areas* at Stockholm University of the Arts. The project explores embodied methods of relating to different landscapes and their human and geological inscriptions.

4.9.26

10:00

Exhibition visit

Tingling Earth – Schauer unter der Haut der Erde 🔥

A teaspoon of healthy soil contains more microorganisms than there are humans on Earth, and a healthy soil microbiome is increasingly being linked to a healthy human gut flora: soil is not only beneath us, but also within us. Soil, as part of a multitude of interwoven (earth-)realities, comes to the fore above all during global crises — in the struggle over resources, as territory, as a supplier of raw materials. At the same time, its ecological dimension reveals itself when the raw materials run dry and devastated, contaminated areas are left behind. The focus on soil raises the question of the foundation on which a community can grow, in the sense of an equal, solidary, and convivial coexistence. The exhibition *Tingling Earth – Schauer unter der Haut der Erde* 🔥 is an invitation to reflect on our present, on new realities, and on visions of a future oriented toward the common good. The exhibition understands itself as an open space for discussion, shared learning, practice, and change. Accordingly, workshops will take place shortly before the opening as well as throughout the run, to which the interested public is invited. What potential lies in art to develop practices through which kinships (re)emerge and their structures become visible? On what soil might an ecological union take shape?

Building on the exhibition *Unheimliche Verschiebungen* (Urbane Künste Ruhr), the Künstler*innenhaus Dortmund presents, with *Tingling Earth – Schauer unter der Haut der Erde* 🔥 a group exhibition that can be understood as an exhibition-within-an-exhibition.

With: Lisa Biletska, Paul Granjon, Lina Kusaite, Margo Zālīte, Viktor Brim, Emerson Culurgioni, Anna Charlotte Frevel, Valentin Bansac, Alice Loumeau (MATTERS.xyz)

Entangled by: Natalia Matsenko, Lex Rütten, Jana Kerima Stolzer, Yuri Yefanov

Sam Nightingale

Fieldworking: attuning to saline ecologies

Fieldworking: attuning to saline ecologies considers how artistic fieldwork as a methodology might respond to places where ‘landscape’, as an aesthetic category, has been unsettled by extraction, contamination and ecological change. Drawing on my co-edited book *Fieldwork for Future Ecologies* (2022), the paper frames *fieldworking* not as a fixed method of observation, but as a situated, responsive and ethically charged practice of attunement: one that learns from the conditions of a site rather than imposing a method upon it. Through examples of artist fieldwork (from the petrochemical corridors of Louisiana to the frozen ice fields of Antarctica), and through my own practice with hypersaline ecologies in south-eastern Australia, the paper explores how fieldwork can become a way of sensing environmentally damaged environments and their spectral co-existing temporalities. In particular, it considers soil chromatography as a photo-alchemical method for working with saline soils, ecological transformation and the material traces of extractive logics.

12:15

Maria Cecília Rocha

Quilombo formation facing extractivism in the Jequitinhonha Valley, Minas Gerais, Brazil

Recently, the Jequitinhonha Valley in Minas Gerais, Brazil, has moved into focus because of the increasing demand for lithium and government policies to attract mining companies to the region. Throughout its history, extractivism has been an important force — from gold and diamond mining to eucalyptus plantations and cattle ranching, and now this boom in lithium mining. At the same time, it is one of the regions with the largest quilombola population in Brazil. Those black communities have been historically related to runaway slaves and are, nowadays, mostly entangled in the struggles for their own land rights, as they have come to be legally recognized as one of Brazil's traditional peoples. This presentation will examine the often contradictory relationship between those communities and the constant and ever-changing movement of the extractive borders in the interior of Brazil.

coffee and snacks 13:00

14:00

Christina Pinsdorf

Thinking Like a Mountain, a Mall, or a Human? Wilderness and Land Non-Use in the Anthropocene

The talk examines the ethical significance of wilderness and land non-use in the Anthropocene and asks what philosophical foundations could guide an overdue land transition. After clarifying the concepts related to land use, it develops and compares three ethical reference points for evaluating human–nature relationships: The ecocentric perspective, articulated through Aldo Leopold’s “thinking like a mountain,” takes the biotic community as the primary locus of value and supports restraint and behavioral change. The anthropocentric postnaturalist perspective, developed via Steven Vogel’s “thinking like a mall,” emphasizes responsibility for the human-shaped environment and aligns in some respects with ecomodernist strategies. The biocentric perspective according to Christina Pinsdorf’s “thinking like a human” argues that epistemic anthropocentrism does not entail normative anthropocentrism and grounds moral considerability

in the own good of living beings understood as specimens of a normatively pre-structured lifeform. Reconstructing the distinct priorities each framework implies, the presentation shows that all three ethical approaches attach importance to the establishment of wilderness (development) areas—yet for different, and at times conflicting, reasons. It argues further that dominant technosolutionist land-transition discourses neglect two ethically central dimensions: the usage interests of non-human living beings and land non-use as a genuine option of action for moral subjects. It concludes by developing open process protection as a strategy for overcoming normative anthropocentrism and by outlining its implications for a truly transformative land transition.

15:00

Carlina Rossée, Maria Cecília Rocha, Yasmeen Al-Qaisi
Chewing on the Crumbs of Extraction. A Metabolic Journey

In the performative lecture format *Chewing on the Crumbs of Extraction*, we trace the ghosts of past and future industrial activity through sound recordings, situated storytelling and chewing together, surfacing the relations between the Ruhr area with the mining regions of Nova Lima, Minas Gerais, and the German Harz Mountains. Coming from places shaped by extractive processes in deeply unequal yet resonant ways, we ask what minerals, herbs, trees, birds and beetles can teach us about solidarity beyond 'landscape' – and what forms of conviviality grow from a shared 'life after landscape' on a fragile planet.

goodbye 16:15