

MLD 022
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**Architecture after Architecture:
Spatial Practice in the Face of
the Climate Emergency.**

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MOULD 022

CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS*

on competition, money, and ownership

Jörg Finkbeiner

We need a different planning culture or a different way of negotiating things. If we look at the impact the building sector has, the CO2 emissions make up over 30 percent. No one is really looking at the grey energy embedded in the construction itself. And this is something that we also can influence as architects.

How can we find solutions for this situation we're in now? We do that in all different kinds of projects, actually. All of them right now are timber constructions. We realised that buildings could store CO2.

I think it's not about buildings only. It is a holistic manner. [...] We need to come out of our niche and say OK, it could work if we change something on a completely different part in the society. [...]

We are still in a big bubble, like all of us sitting here, it is still a bubble.

On the other side, I would say [that] there is something changing. I can see the wind changing.

Lina Lahiri

GSW was the beginning of something that's the red thread through our office, always trying to do something innovative, always trying to combine beauty and efficiency. It was a naturally ventilated office, which at that time specifically was very radical.

And there you see that it's, we're still very much living in a very specific bubble.

I think it's a pity that architects don't collaborate more. We always have a very competitive relationship, but we are not each other's enemies.

Johanna Wörner

We use the lifecycle assessment also as a tool for decision-making in our design, from competition to later phases as well. We also use lifecycle assessment as a tool to communicate to our clients the footprint of their building and our design. We're trying to make construction a lot more circular in the way that we reuse materials, but also that we apply materials in a circular manner, which we've been doing in many cases before. But now we're looking at the flexibility of structures and their flexibility of use.

The biggest potential that we actually have in most European countries is what already exists. We just need to see how we use it efficiently and sufficiently. For example, we have a lot of empty houses in the countryside, but we actually need housing in cities.

Ben Pohl

The first question is always: can we reuse this building without even touching it? So, what would be the minimal transformation and new uses that match with this building? If we [decide] we can't use it, then "Situ" or "Zirkular" disassemble it.

In a kind of meta level, what we are always concerned with, is being faster than the market. This means that if we see areas on the fringes of Basel or Zurich, in Switzerland, or even in parts of Germany, we find players who can buy them as a kind of protective shelter or protective ownership, a sustainable separation of ground and building, eventually pulling the ground out of the capitalist economy.

There is too much money and too little time. But, really for us, it's the contrary, less money and more time helps sustainability. We are talking about thousands of tons of steel that could be reused for the same you want to do on this place.

**on the local and the global,
waste, real estate financing,
and co-option.**



Jana Gebauer

We are the city, but we don't own the city anymore. And whatever alternative plans we have, [they] are smashed by people buying the ground beneath our asses, so we are not able to do stuff anymore.

For me, it works better if I can develop a new narrative that gives an idea of hope, so that people can imagine change. If they can't imagine change or things being changed, then they wouldn't be willing to go on the streets or do things differently. So, this is my tool: using imagination and imaginative power and longing.



Manuel Ehlers

What institutional actors [are] searching for is very clean, favourably new, buildings that are either residential or office buildings or hotels.

We build too much [and] not according to actual needs. We cause a lot of damage to nature and a lot of carbon emissions with that.

We do not thrive for a portfolio of real estate that all have nice and shiny certificates on their wall, but [we aim for one] that is truly compliant with climate goals.

If I tear something down [...] and build something new with precious materials, I will not be able to provide affordable rents, whether it is housing or whether it is commercial real estate.

Kū Kahaka'au

In our beliefs, we descend from Earth Mother and Sky Father and the islands are our older siblings and so from the beginning of time we've had a reciprocal relationship with the land, we had a familial relationship with the land, which means, you know, the land to us is family. The islands are family. Nature is family.

We have to change that mindset. That's self-centred way of thinking versus the common welfare, which includes the welfare of the environment.



Alex Nehmer

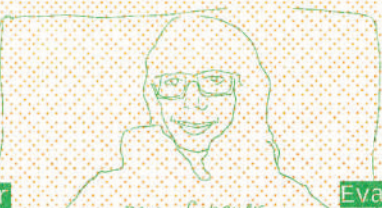
I try to look at ecological questions as political questions. Because the exploitation of nature is always related to injustices and inequalities amongst humans. [...] We can see that the effects of environmental destruction and who is suffering from it is disproportionately distributed across the globe.

[As long as] we externalise costs and ecological destructions that come with building in other parts of other countries, then we [continue to create] more inequalities instead of really changing the way we build our cities.



Anna Scheuermann

We have already built everything we need. If we don't stop building now, we will have no energy turn, no climate turn. In our world, [these turns are] possible. We work for transformation.



Eva Kail

The aim is to combine social and technical intelligence because, very often, in a very big institution you have a specialisation and not a holistic view.

One question is about how you define architecture. There's a strong focus on technical solutions, but quite often the social impacts are neglected. [...] With gender and climate change adaptation there is a lot of synthesis, but there are also conflicts.

Cities can be an institution. If this has been identified in dialogue with practitioners and universities, what already really works, then it really can be very helpful. [...] we call it the 4-column system. And it's about economies, sustainable ecology, planning quality and the social column and this is really all the projects are discussed and trying to find out what are the best on these different angles and now.



Tatjana Schneider



Julius Grambow



Kū Kahaka'au

* These quotes are extracts from our "Climate Conversations" that took place on 9th and 15th December 2021. You will find short bios of the participants on pages 18 and 19.

TROUBLE, DOUGHNUTS & PLURIVERSAL THINKING:

Tuesday March 29th 2022

Hinfahrt
08:34 Berlin Hbf
Zug IC148
Waggonnummer 7 Sitzplatz
45, 47, 48

3 passengers enter the train

Wagenart: Mit Tisch
Bordbistro
Maskenpflicht nach
gesetzl. Regelung;
regional gilt FFP2-
Maskenpflicht
Im Zug gilt bundesweit
3G-Regel

Arturo Escobar, *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018).

The book and the idea of "staying with the trouble" are especially impatient with two responses that I hear all too frequently to the horrors of the Anthropocene and the Capitalocene. The first is easy to describe and, I think, dismiss, namely, a comic faith in technofixes, whether secular or religious: technology will somehow come to the rescue of its naughty but very clever children, or what amounts to the same thing, God will come to the rescue of his disobedient but ever hopeful children. In the face of such touching silliness about technofixes (or techno-apocalypses), sometimes it is hard to remember that it remains important to embrace situated technical projects and their people. They are not the enemy; they can do many important things for staying with the trouble and for making generative oddkin.

The second response, harder to dismiss, is probably even more destructive: namely, a position that the game is over, it's too late, there's no sense trying to make anything any better, or at least no sense having any active trust in each other in working and playing for a resurgent world. Some scientists I know express this kind of bitter cynicism, even as they actually work very hard to make a positive difference for both people and other critters. Some people who describe themselves as critical cultural theorists or political progressives express these ideas too. I think the odd coupling of actually working and playing for multispecies flourishing with tenacious energy and skill, while expressing an explicit "game over" attitude that can and does discourage others, including students,

08:49 Berlin-Spandau
09:30 Stendal
10:00 Wolfsburg Hbf
10:36 Hannover Hbf

NEW ECOLOGIES FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY aims to promote a dialogue between those who are transforming the understanding of the relationship between nature and culture. The series revisits existing fields such as environmental history, historical ecology, environmental anthropology, ecological economics, and cultural and political ecology. It addresses emerging tendencies, such as the use of complexity theory to rethink a range of questions on the nature-culture axis. It also deals with epistemological and ontological concerns, building bridges between the various forms of knowing and ways of being embedded in the multiplicity of practices of social actors worldwide. This series hopes to foster convergences among differently located actors and to provide a forum for authors and readers to widen the fields of theoretical inquiry, professional practice, and social struggles that characterize the current environmental arena.

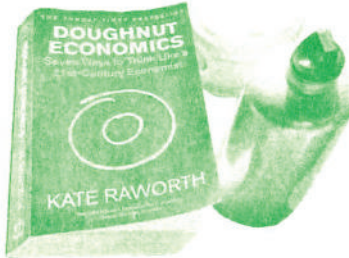
John Boughton, *Municipal Dreams: The Rise and Fall of Council Housing* (London: Verso, 2018)

Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016) 3.

Community groups, from Amsterdam to Birmingham, who had started hosting Doughnut Meetups, and exploring what it would mean to create regenerative and distributive futures in their own neighbourhoods.

It quickly became clear that the most useful thing to do would be to connect these pioneering changemakers, along with many others around the world, in order to learn together what it means to start turning radical ideas into transformative action. So I found a fantastic strategic partner in the regenerative economist Carlota Sanz Ruiz and together we co-founded Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL) as a place to connect everyone interested in putting Doughnut Economics into practice. The name is intentional, of course. It's all about taking ideas off the page and turning them into action. It's definitely a lab: DEAL's small team is continually learning by working alongside changemakers who are evolving the economy one experiment at a time. And, yes, aiming for economic transformation is indeed a big deal.

At the heart of DEAL's work is an online community platform, inviting people to become members, try out the tools, and share back their innovations and experience. We are blown away every day by the creativity of this community. We are also continually asking ourselves how we can best support people to turn the ideas of Doughnut Economics into practice at the speed and scale that these times demand. Here are some of the insights that we've been learning along the way.



Where the energy is: As the mother of young twins, my time was tight when this book first came out and that forced me to start following a beautifully simple principle. Don't waste time knocking on shut doors; work with people who want to act, because there are plenty of them. Following this principle, DEAL has never lobbied or tried to persuade anyone to engage with the ideas of Doughnut Economics – we respond to changemakers who, knowing their own

[JB: I began the blog five years ago now, initially to record and celebrate a broad municipal heritage that I felt was unjustly neglected. That included the early schools and libraries, the bath and washhouses and health centres. But given its scale and significance, housing – council housing – always took centre stage and it became a dominant focus as housing became a huge and controversial issue in British politics.

In that context, the blog was intended to be a political intervention too – not a polemic, I hope, but a simple reminder of the overwhelmingly positive role the state, local and national, has played in improving the lives of millions over the years. It seemed important to say this when, for many decades, state intervention has been so systematically maligned and the market so uncritically lauded.

I can't say that council housing, the subject of the book, wasn't being addressed elsewhere but it was being addressed so badly. Media coverage tended to be caricatured and stigmatising; political discourse was generally pretty ill-informed and simplistic. There was some decent academic writing on the topic but nothing obvious in the mainstream for a general reader. It seemed time to put that right.

From an interview by Andrew Stevens with John Boughton
For 3:AM MAGAZINE

Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist* (London: Random House, 2022) 295.



passenger 4 does not enter after all... :(

11:10 Minden (Westf)
11:20 Bad Oeynhausen
11:59 Osnabrück Hbf
12:24 Rheine
12:37 Bad Bentheim

"Did you know, that as soon as soon as we pass the border you can take off the masks?!"

13:01 Hengelo
13:13 Almelo
13:41 Deventer
13:58 Apeldoorn

"That building is by Hertzberger!!" "Yes, wow!!"

14:24 Amersfoort
14:38 Hilversum

15:00 Amsterdam Centraal



REMINDER: KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Moving beyond metaphorical systems of language and complexity.

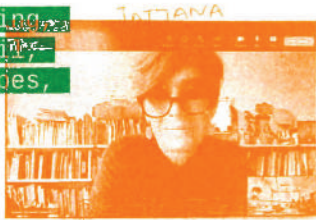
Talking about seeds, growing, fermenting, nurturing; soil, agents, ingredients, recipes, mould!

"use" instead of "utilise"
"describe" instead of convoluted terms and opaque words

"Clouds of things"

We want to show that we are NOT stuck in an unchangeable present, but that we can change the course of events. We want to point out other trajectories!

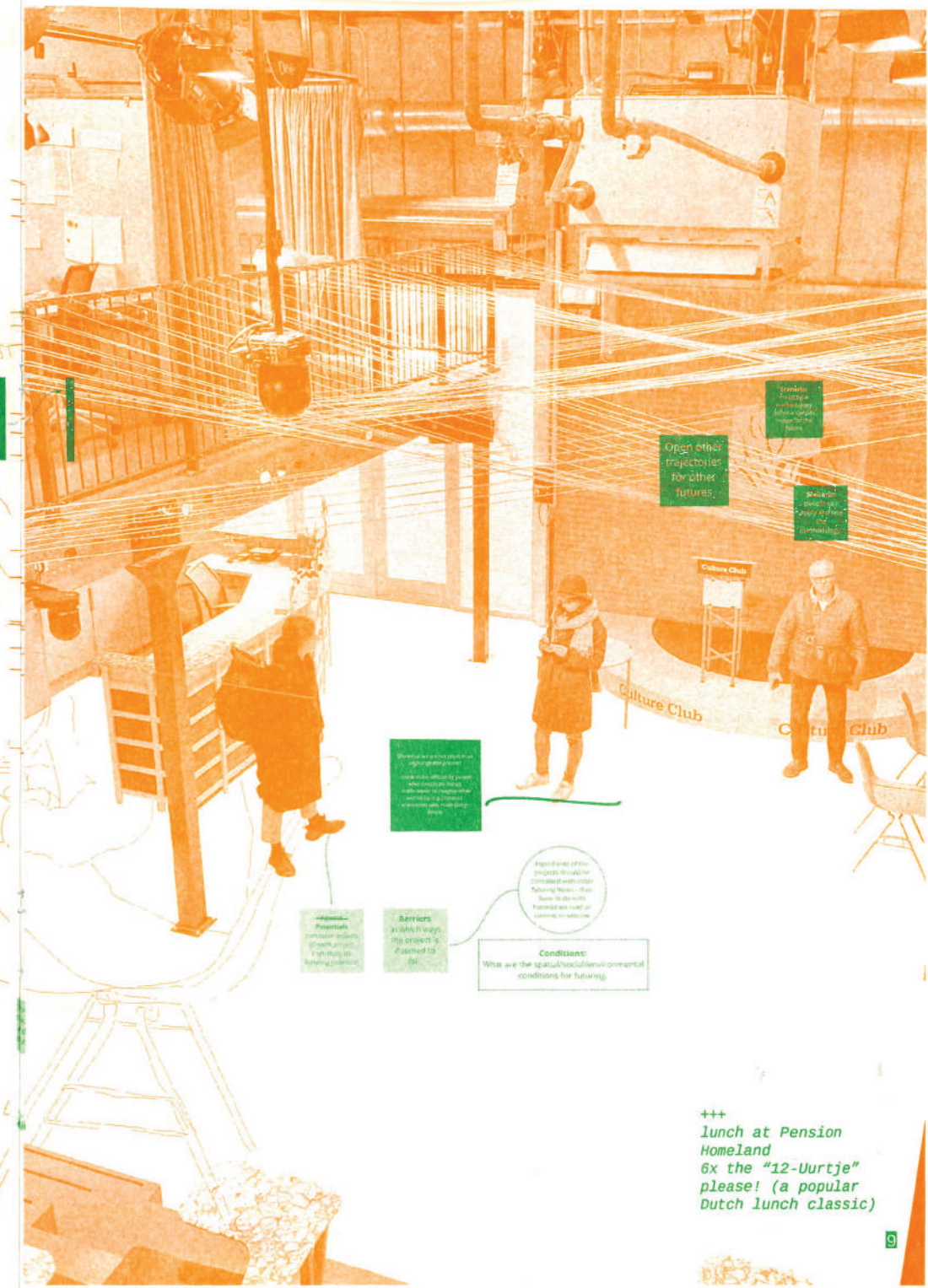
Fresh start, revisit the application to begin with.



Identify a course with the category of content from the project (related to BAU etc)

It is looking at what would projects implement at certain points, rather than using their project, approach AND what are critical points of projects

We talk about agents, things, subjects which we take away from each project (CS)



Open other trajectories for other futures.

Formal + digital + analogue + physical + digital + analogue + physical

Material + digital + analogue + physical + digital + analogue + physical

Identify a course with the category of content from the project (related to BAU etc)

Agents: Physical agents, things, subjects which we take away from each project (CS)

Barriers: In which ways the project is constrained?

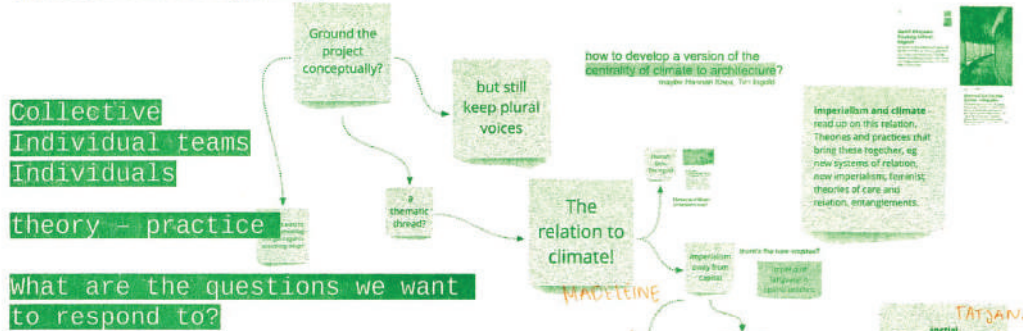
Important for the project to be considered as a future trajectory - that is, to be able to be used as a starting point for future trajectories.

Conditions: What are the spatial/social/environmental conditions for futureing?

+++ Lunch at Pension Homeland 6x the "12-Uurtje" please! (a popular Dutch lunch classic)

WAYS OF WORKING

"Occidental modes of dwelling have eroded the systemic mode of living based on radical interdependence. It is thus imperative that other modes of dwelling be found, imagined, and designed by incorporating relational modes of living into urban landscapes, within an open and broad communal conception."



It's about architecture, and it's about the climate emergency and it has urgency. That is the grounding of our project!

ANTHONY

let's not forget the emergency. However we can design in relation to nonrationalist forms of spatial practice

climate projects

interdependence

Climate

No Barriers but blind spots

They suggest ignorance but it could be intentional or unintentional

Can the scenarios escape the current barriers?

Construction of the book construction of the argument

Session 4: SCENARIOS

Do the scenarios aim to be results/products?
Are they instigations?
First approaches?
Not solutions but things on the way? Half-way between critiques and potential answers? Options on route, never quite finished?



JULIUS

"Can design be seen in support of the life-making and world-making potential of struggles to relocalize, re-communalize, and re-earth social life? What would it mean to design outside the hegemony of the liberal, secular, and rationalistic ontology of capitalist modernity?"

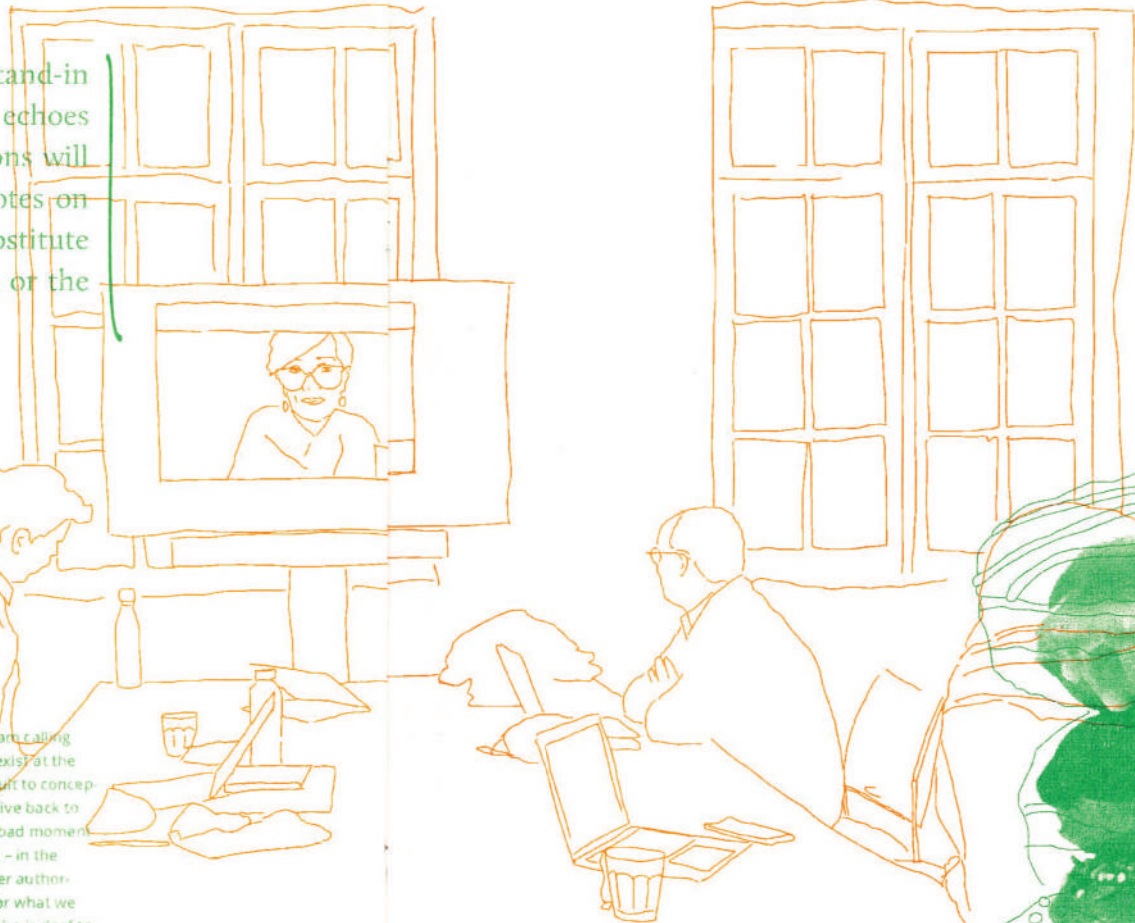
Arturo Escobar
"On the Ontological Metrofitting of Cities"

Prepared for e-flux architecture
<https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/>

WAYS FOR FUTURING OTHERWISE

"Here, the *otherwise* is a linguistic stand-in for a stance against; it is a posture, the layered echoes of a gesture. I promise you that no approximations will be made. Only pleas, wishes, frantic screams, notes on strategy, contributions in different registers. Substitute the *otherwise* for that thing that keeps you alive, or the ferocity with which you detest this world."

Lola Olufemi, *Experiments in Imagining Otherwise* (London: Hajar Press, 2021), 3.



The intrusion of this type of transcendence, which I am calling Gaia, makes a major unknown, which is here to stay, exist at the heart of our lives. This is perhaps what is most difficult to conceptualize: no future can be foreseen in which she will give back to us the liberty of ignoring her. It is not a matter of a "bad moment that will pass," followed by any kind of happy ending – in the shoddy sense of a "problem solved." We are no longer authorized to forget her. We will have to go on answering for what we are undertaking in the face of an implacable being who is deaf to our justifications. A being who has no spokesperson, or rather, whose spokespersons are exposed to fearsome temptations. We know the old catty, which generally comes from well-fed experts, accustomed to living to the effect that "the problem is, there are too many of us." Numbers whose "disappearance" would permit significant energy savings. But if we listen to Lovelock, who has become the prophet of disaster, it would be necessary to reduce the human population to about 500 million people in order to pacify Gaia and live reasonably well in harmony with her. The so-called rational calculations, which result in the conclusion that the only solution is to eradicate the vast majority of humans between now and the end of the century, scarcely dissimulate the delusion of a murderous and obscene abstraction. Gaia does not demand such eradication. She doesn't demand anything.



How much of our work is necessarily collective?

Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism* (London: Open Humanities Press, with meson press, 2015), 47.

It must be clear voices, raised as a collective exercise

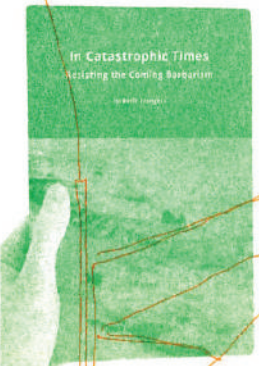
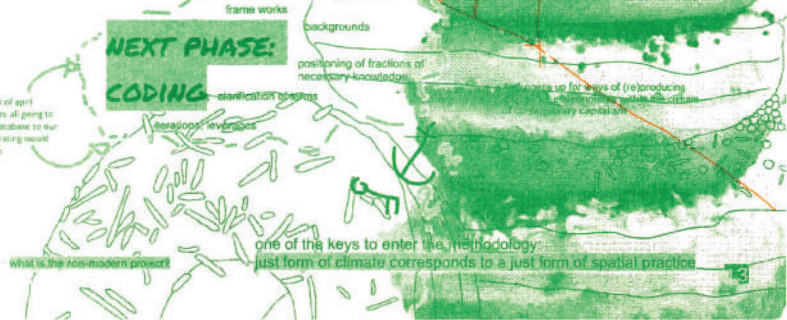
In next year, build up instructions

In the future, we need to work on developing a more forward focus

From first week of April onwards, we are all going to focus on the database to our way of collaborating would have to change

so far, the project collects many positions without centering our own in it, growing more 'organically'

NEXT PHASE: CODING



In Catastrophic Times Resisting the Coming Barbarism

what is the non-modern project

one of the keys to enter the methodology just form of climate corresponds to a just form of spatial practice

AMSTERDAM ATLANTIS

Amsterdam is drowning. Slowly sinking into the swirling water. How many buildings will this ground sustain? How many bridges, dykes and windmills draining large tracts of grazing and planting land? How many tulip crops and cattle? How many gas fields extracting gas and exposing peat to the air?

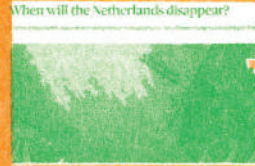
The city's children grow up with a verse: "Amsterdam, die grote stad / Die is gebouwd op palen / Als die stad eens ommeviel / Wie zou dat dan betalen? Loosely translated: "Amsterdam, big city / It is built on piles / If the city would collapse / Who would pay for that?"

A short trip to Atlantis

In an attempt to slow down the process of fading into insignificance, trade cities dropped ballast from their overinvested grounds and simply moved it elsewhere. From Venice to the Wisselbank To New Amsterdam and Wall Street To Londinium and the Bank of England;

From the Hanseatic League and port penthouses,
From trading companies of all cardinal directions,
From drawing lines in Prussian Castles
To the Pearl River Delta and its Special Economic Zone,
To walking home on other empires' grounds,

To growing up between the pipelines of white men in suits. How long must poles rot from the inside before something else can grow on their mouldy surfaces?



When will the Netherlands disappear?



THE FOSSIL AGE, SEEN THROUGH A BARREL

Gliding over a sea of emptied bullets, the camera slowly pans up towards the back of a white man in a suit watching a wrecked streetscape of a presumably generic town in an arid climate. The man turns around as the camera comes to a halt on eye-level. He smiles gently at the sight of the spectator. In soft-spoken US-American English, the man informs the spectator that there is one firearm per twelve people on the planet. "The only question is", he continues whilst drawing from his cigarette, "how do we arm the other eleven?"

The Fossil Age has justified its exploitative existence by promising progress, growth, and welfare to eventually trickle-down to the Majority World. The lubricated top percent of predominantly white, male, western-educated influence would equip the rest of the world with the possibility of a life like theirs; all they needed was more labour, more oil, more gas, more pipelines, more pesticides, and less regulation.

On the verge of a world shed between its physical deficits and virtual promises, they foster more connection: more ports, more docks, more boring towers, more radio stations, more undersea cables, more mines,

more tarmac, more planes, more servers. They accelerate the development of more financial districts, more Free Ports, more Free Trade Zones, in general: more freedom for those who can afford to die with their lives lived at the expense of unknown generations.

For most humans of the Fossil Age, controlling access to growth means the creation of new forms of capital. Initially measured in stones, heads, and feet; later in barrels, calories, and gigajoules, control now is most apparent in rabbits; and truly terrestrial they are. Gunpowder, Manpower, Sugar, Cotton, Tobacco, Coffee, Tea, Spices, Minerals, Mangoes, Shark Fins, Tropical Woods. They said, whatever this planet has to give shall be unrooted to grow.

At the time of this text, the initial scope of the man's mission is halved; there are only six more people left to be armed.

Behind the man, on the grassy patches in the shadow of a burning car, a fragile stroke of a young Neem tree stretches towards the light.

IN CONVERSATION WITH



Ben Pohl

Urban Designer (HCU, Germany) and communication designer. He works for denkstatt sàrl (since 2016) in Basel and as a lecturer in Switzerland and Germany.

Alex Nehmer

Editor at ARCH+ and co-curator for the project *Cohabitation Strategies* (2021). Her work focuses on critical cultural studies, seeing architecture and city as materialisations of social, political and economic orders.

Anna Scheuermann

Architect, curator, moderator, and spokesperson for Architects for Future. She co-curated the German entry (Ready for Take-off) for the 7th International Architecture Biennale in Sao Paulo (2007) and the German pavilion (Making Heimat) at the 15th Venice Architecture Biennale (2016).

Johanna Wörner

Architect and sustainability specialist at Sauerbruch Hutton. She is also a spokeswoman of "Architects for Future".

Eva Kail

Chief Senate Councillor, urban planner and expert on gender urban planning and construction at the Office for Strategic Planning in Vienna. She has contributed to more than 60 projects related to gender equality in housing, transportation, planning, and design of public spaces.

Lina Lahiri

Partner Architect and member of the Executive Group and the Business Development Team of Sauerbruch Hutton. She has led projects such as Jessop West and Low2No, a low-carbon mixed-use housing district in Helsinki.

Kū Kahakalau

Native Hawaiian educator, researcher, cultural practitioner, grassroots activist, song writer, and expert in Hawaiian language, history and culture. Since the mid 1990s Kū has led the Hawaiian-focused education movement.

Jana Gebauer

Freelance researcher, speaker, lecturer and moderator with focus on post-growth concepts of economic actors in diverse and solidarity-based economies. She is also fellow and board member of the Institut für ökologische Wirtschaftsforschung (IÖW), Berlin.

Manuel Ehlers

Industrial engineer specialised in sustainable construction and Head of sustainable property in Triodos Bank. He expanded the "Sustainable Real Estate" division at the Berlin location for Triodos Bank Germany.

Jörg Finkbeiner

Co-founder of Partner and Partner Architekten (2006) and Cradle to Cradle Consultant (since 2011). He has led research projects for the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMUV) about "Future Strategies in Rural Areas".