

LANDING DOWN TO EARTH

United Institutes
for the festival
Theater der Welt



INTRODUCTION

Incubation as an artform

For 44 years „Theater der Welt“ has been the largest international theatre festival in Germany. It has been organized by the German „International Theatre Institute“ (ITI). Every second year it is hosted by an alternate city with different theatres under varying directorships. In the summer of 2023, it took place in Frankfurt and Offenbach hosted by the Theater Mousonturm. The program director, Chiaki Soma from Tokyo, was surprisingly the first ever non-European curator of this festival. The necessity to dissolve the dominant eurocentric perspectives is as plain as day. Therefore, Chiaki Soma proposed renaming the festival to more reflect a global performance culture: „Theater der Welten“ (Theatre of the Worlds) and instead of announcing it something like the “Olympic Games” of theatre, as has been done in the past, she heralded in an “international meeting of artists and audiences”. A space for

encounters between two cities, where the role of performative arts in post-pandemic times of global conflicts can be reflected upon. She added „incubation“ to the long list of formats that the program offers: talks, movies, performance, incubation - concerts, dance, VR-experiences, incubation - puppet theatre, drama, music theatre, incubation. Why? What does the time, that a virus needs to gestate and spread inside a body, or the time that birds spend sitting on their eggs to brood them, have to do with a festival program? Chiaki Soma believes in a time for reflection, a space for innovation, theatre as the practice of healing and tending, the spreading of a good virus, the bridging of various worlds, generating new perspectives and using one’s own body to give warmth to some new form of life which has not yet been encountered.

We were invited to participate in this festival, to look for it.



LANDING DOWN TO EARTH

There is only one planet Earth that we all share. But there are many different perspectives on how to look at it. Maybe that is, why we can't all agree on how best to save it. There is also only one river Main, which (still) flows from Offenbach to Frankfurt. And here, too, many different points of view come together. For the "Theater der Welten" 2023, students from Offenbach and Frankfurt developed a series of MRIU's (Mobile

Research Incubator Units) that were set up at three public space locations along the Main River. A marketplace of artistic experiments offered the visitors new perspectives on the urban space located between the two cities. What is the role of artistic urban practice in the city of money? How can we promote care and pluralism in public space? How do conflicts and crises affect our urban life?



UNITED INSTITUTES

Landing - down to earth was a transdisciplinary project by the UNITED INSTITUTES to look at the worlds of Frankfurt and Offenbach from various angles in a critical way. A consortium of more than 50 students from the Offenbach University of Art and Design (HFG), the Städelschule Frankfurt and Tokyo University of the Arts, their professors and a marvelous support team came together for a single semester of research. They worked for two weeks "out in the field" in and between the two cities, presented their research, made workshops together, performed, partied and transformed the three landing platforms into an artistic nature culture learning environment. A nomadic public classroom. The dates were scheduled so as to allow for maximum synergies: the first landing happened at the opening party of the "Theatre of the Worlds" festival in Offenbach, the second during the long museum night

in front of the MAK and the final landing happened during the annual student show „Rundgang“ of the HFG in Offenbach. This was the best way to insure receiving the most attention possible. In order to get out of the theatre, art and academic world's bubbles we organized a public parade from one city to the other in the direction of the river's flow - the flags and costumes were created in a workshop with Raul Walch, Rose Henry and Lukas Hamicaro. The central slogan was gleaned from a lecture on „terrestrial tales“ by the architect and researcher Cary Siress:

“Who does the world think it is?”

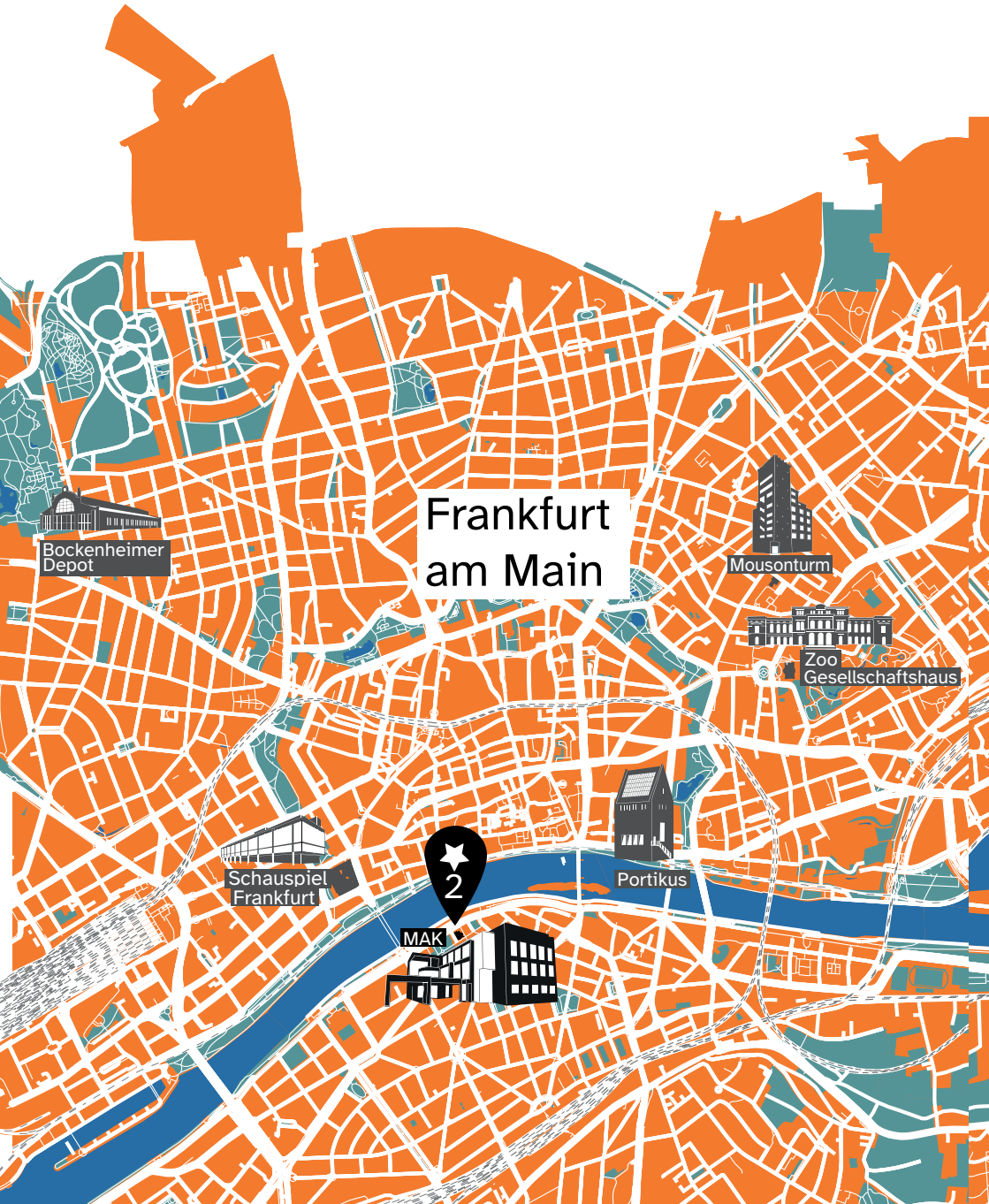
This little booklet is the documentation of the project. Thanks to all participants, creators, supporters and audiences/ participants.

Benjamin Foerster-Baldenius,
Heike Schuppelius and
Kai Vöckler

ANNA PIETOCCHA | AI VI BUI |
JISHKARIANI | BEILIN QI | BEN
BOYAN ZHOU | CHIAKI SOM
DANJA BADER | EMELIE TRENK
FRANCESCA BAGINI | GAMZE BA
KE SCHUPPELIUS | HIBIKI YAMA |
| JANA KOEHLE | JIAWEI TIAN |
PAVESI | JULIAN GLUNDE | KAI V
KATO | KORCHAKORN VIRAVAI
BONČHAKA | LUIS BENZ | LUKAS HA
GI ZHU | MARLON VARGAS | MARTA
MIYUKI OKA | NILS WILDEGA
PAUL BÖTTCHER | PAUL GROSS
SANGHAE KWON | SHENGYANG Z
TAKUMI UCHIDA | YASUAKI
| YUGI WANG MYUNSUB S
ITO | YUKO MOHRI | [We](#)

ALEVTYNA MELNYCHUK | ANO
JAMIN FOERSTER BALDENIUS |
A | DA MARIANA YUZAWA |
LER | FELIX ADAM | FENG YE |
KTIR | HANNAH BORGHESE | HEI-
HYEHYUN SONG | JACEK VASINA
JONATHAN BEPLER | JOSEPHINE
VOECKLER | KEN SHIMIZU | KOJI
IYA | LAILA ZAIDI TOUIS | LARRY
AMILCARO | MARIKO MIKAMI JIA-
A KAMIENSKA | MIAKI OKAMURA |
ANS | NOZOMU KISHIMOTO |
S | RAUL WALCH | ROSE HENRY |
ZHANG | SOPO KASHAKASHVILI |
YAMANO | YUEHAO XING
UH | YUJIN PARK | YUKI

Are The United Institues



Frankfurt am Main

Bockenheimer
Depot

Mousonturm

Zoo
Gesellschaftshaus

Schauspiel
Frankfurt

Portikus

2

MAK

UNITED INSTITUTES AT THEATER DER WELT



Cohabitation Lab
Daimlerstraße

Hafen 2

Alte Schlosserei

Capitol

Rathaus

Offenbach
am Main





June 29th, first landing of the Mobile-Research-Incubatorator Units at the opening party of Theater der Welt @ HAFEN 2 in Offenbach.

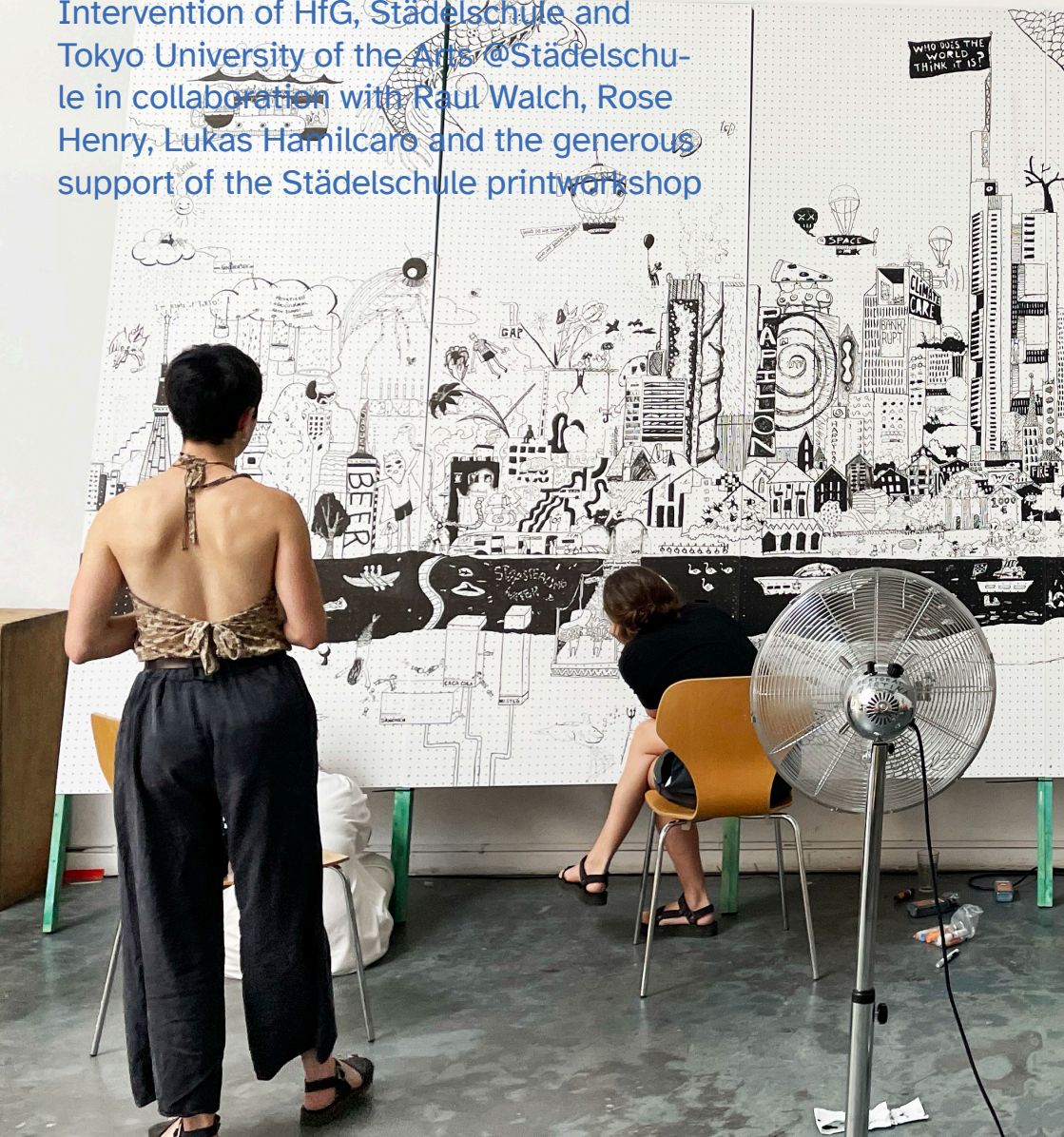
LANDING 1

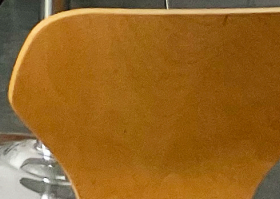
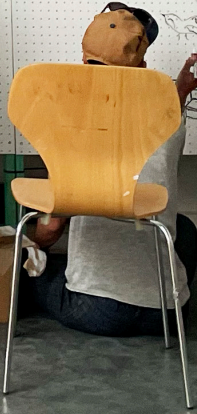




United Institutes Workshop

July 5,6,7th the preparation of the joint
Intervention of HfG, Städelschule and
Tokyo University of the Arts @Städelschu-
le in collaboration with Raul Walch, Rose
Henry, Lukas Hamilcaro and the generous
support of the Städelschule printworkshop





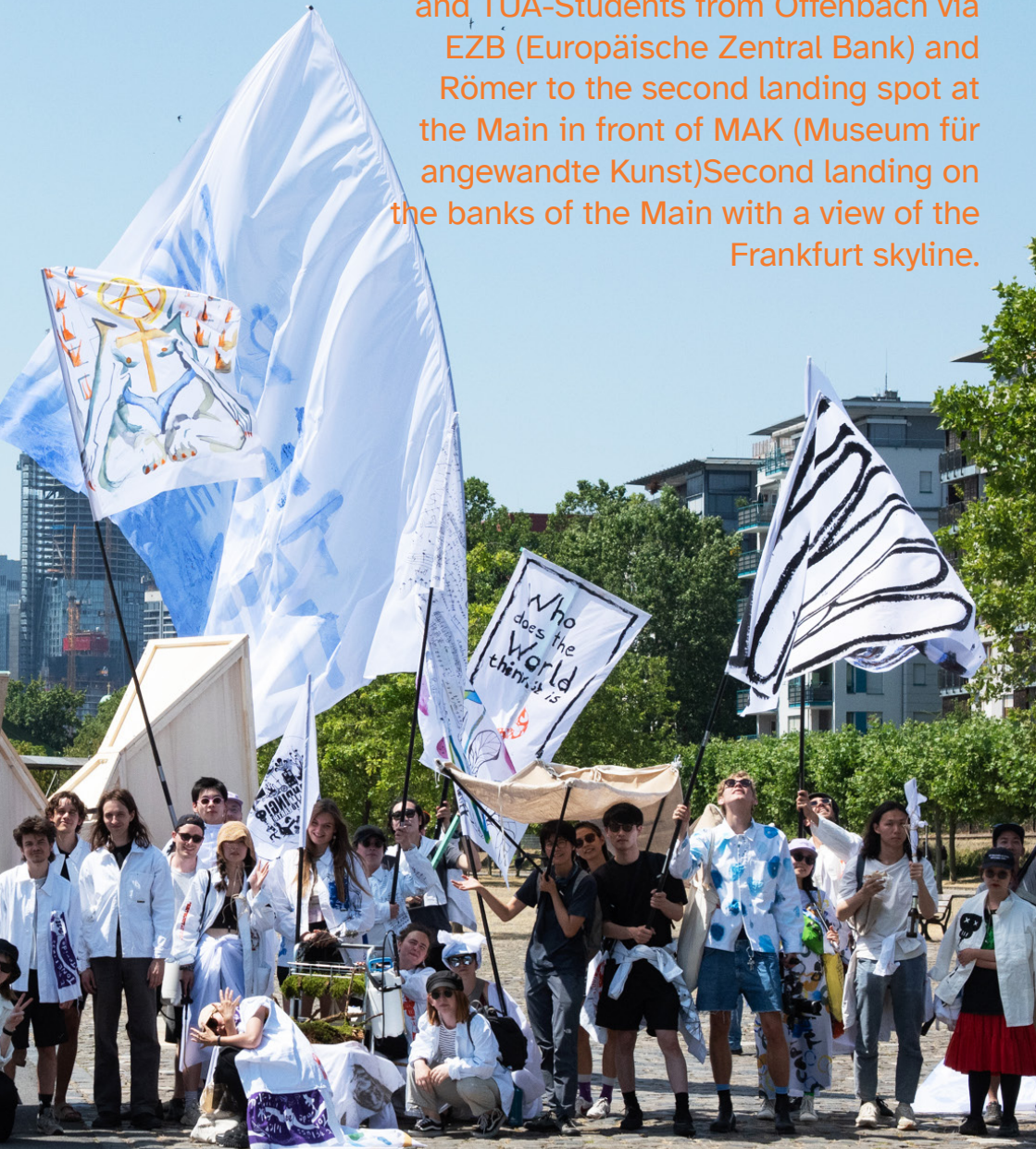






Parade + Landing 2

July 8th, A Parade with Staedel-, HFG- and TUA-Students from Offenbach via EZB (Europäische Zentral Bank) and Römer to the second landing spot at the Main in front of MAK (Museum für angewandte Kunst) Second landing on the banks of the Main with a view of the Frankfurt skyline.













LANDING 3

July 15th, third and final landing of the Mobile-Research-Incubatorator Units at the Rundgang exhibition of HFG @ Stadthof in front of Offenbachs town hall.



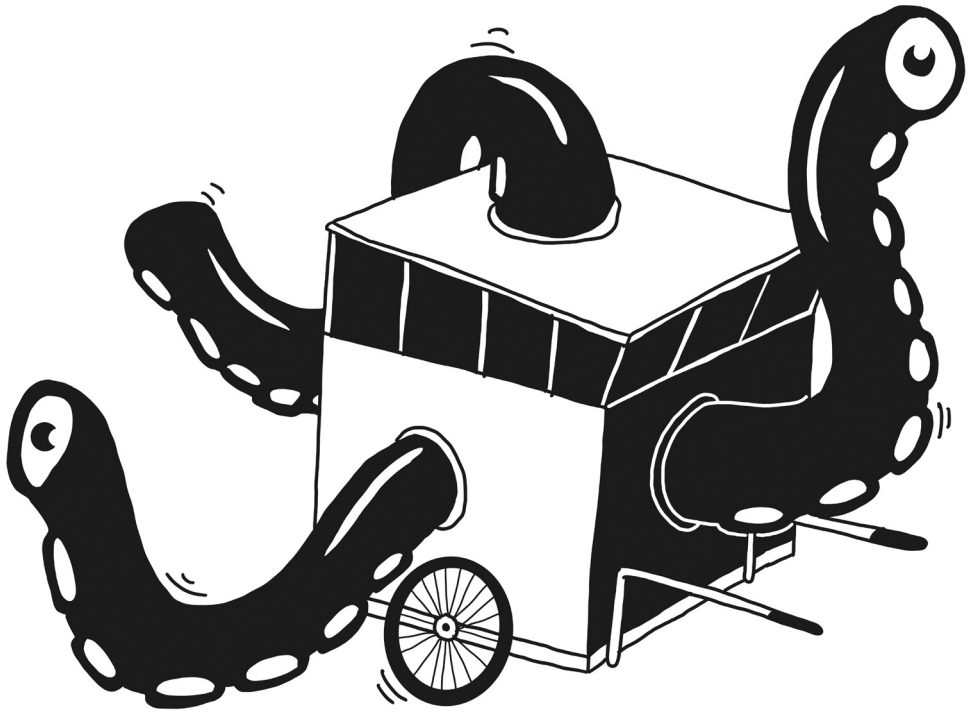
WHO

DOES

THINK

THE WORLD

IT IS?



MAINTENANCE

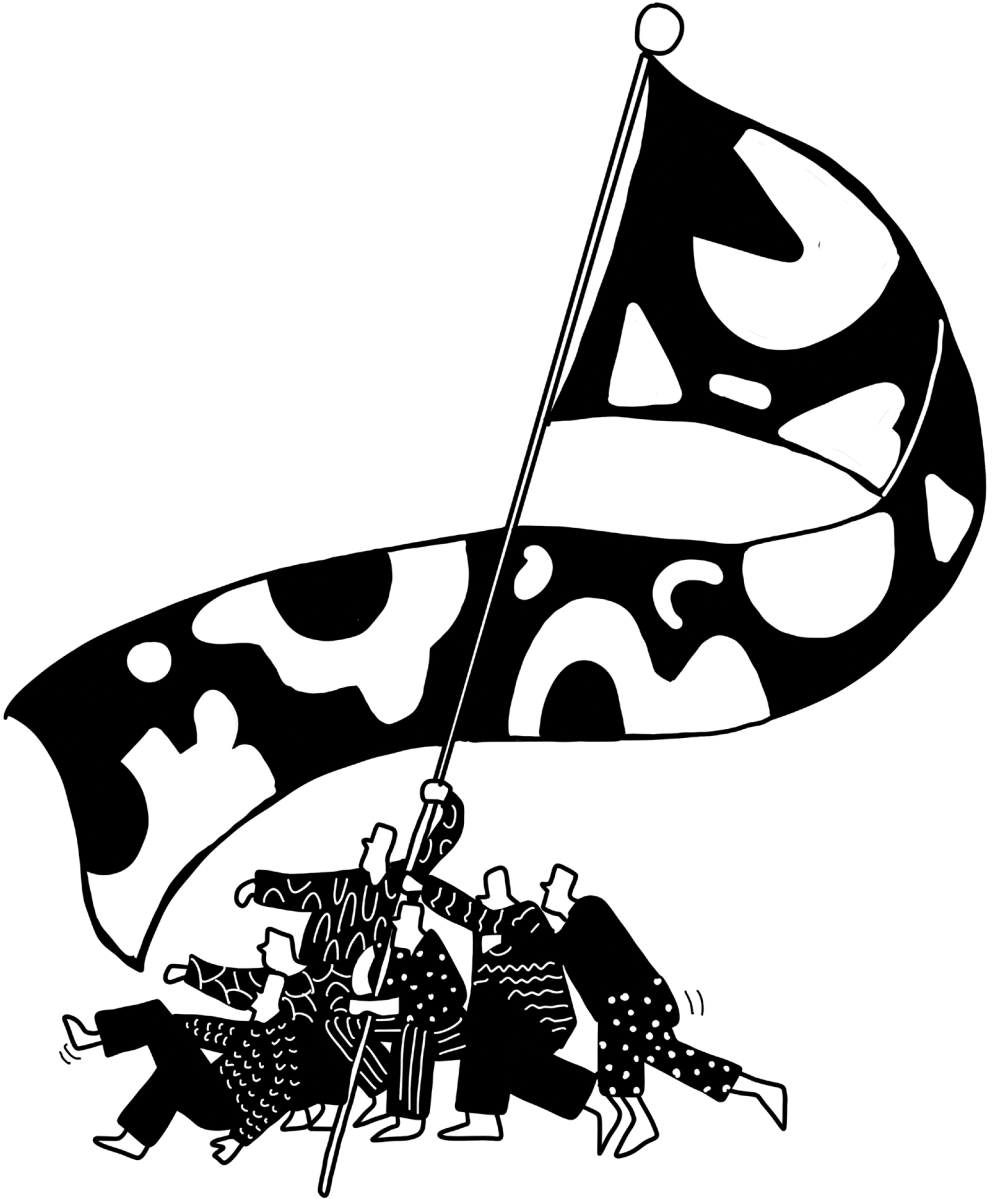
Jacek Vasina

„Maintenance“ is an art installation that is balancing on the verge between visual joke, critical thought and a mobile shelter. By observing urban development in the form of new construction plans and freshly built spaces, the installation in an exaggerated way tries to visualize some of the absurdities of these pre-developments and propose extreme solutions, such as absolutely subverting residential comfort by forcing the user to interact with his/her neighbor every time he/she wants to take a shower

or eat some breakfast. The original idea is that, thanks to its wheels, it can drive up to other spaces and „slide“ into them with its rubber tentacles, essentially invading them, by posing a public utility element; a bit like a parasitic entity, camouflaging its true nature. It can also pose as a free-standing object, with no other buildings nearby, resembling a children's monument plucked from an imaginary playground, and in this form, it is very likely to be invaded itself and interacted with, by: children and tipsy adults.







OPENED FLAGS

Sopo Kashakashvili | Larry Bonchaka

„Opened Flags“ was a collaborative intervention and pop-up performance by Sopo Kashakashvili and Larry Bonchaka. Flags create visibility, they unite, they separate, they gather, they represent, they are loud. How can we create solidarity in the city? How can activist urbanism make the city a space of diversity, refuge, rest, reproduction, arrival, gathering? Peoples demands, concerns, reflections are engraved on various canvases as mobile urban messages. We used flag and banner materials as urban message canvases for the public and overall reflection on what messages the world might need to hear today. The message we wanted to deliver to the public was taken from a lyrical poem by Emily Dickinson about Hope. We were mesmerized by its de-

finition of hope, and decided to use it as a public canvas and message which reflects sense of a „present“. The performance took place at the Main River with the Frankfurt Ruder-Club 1884 e.V. Boat rowers carrying hand painted flags by Larry Bonchaka and Sopo Kashakashvili. The message to the public was „Hello Humans“. A boat was wrapped with various colorful flags and its rowers were wearing hand painted t-shirts. Flag Wavers stood in front of the Frankfurt skyline like Capper David Friedrich’s painting ‚Wanderer above the sea of fog‘ waving a 5m flag along the bank of the Main River while waiting for the rowers and their boat to arrive. While, the question of - what is the driving force of hope in our society remains unanswered?







MOSSCAPE

Ai Vi Bui | Paul Böttcher | Yujin Park
Josephine Pavesi | Marlon Vargas
Marta Kamienska | Felix Adam
Hannah Borghese | Francesca Bagini

In terms of urbanisation, climate protection and sustainability, humans have an ambivalent relationship with nature. As humans, we are dependent on nature, but we neglect it and distance ourselves from it with the expansion of cities. The project „Mosscape: Hosting Taunus Nature“ aims to address this ambivalent relationship in the form of an interactive and performative installation. Inspired by the cyclical processes that happen in forests in which trees are returned to the earth by nature, tree trunks overgrown with moss were „borrowed“ from the Taunus forest to, on the one hand, to be ca-

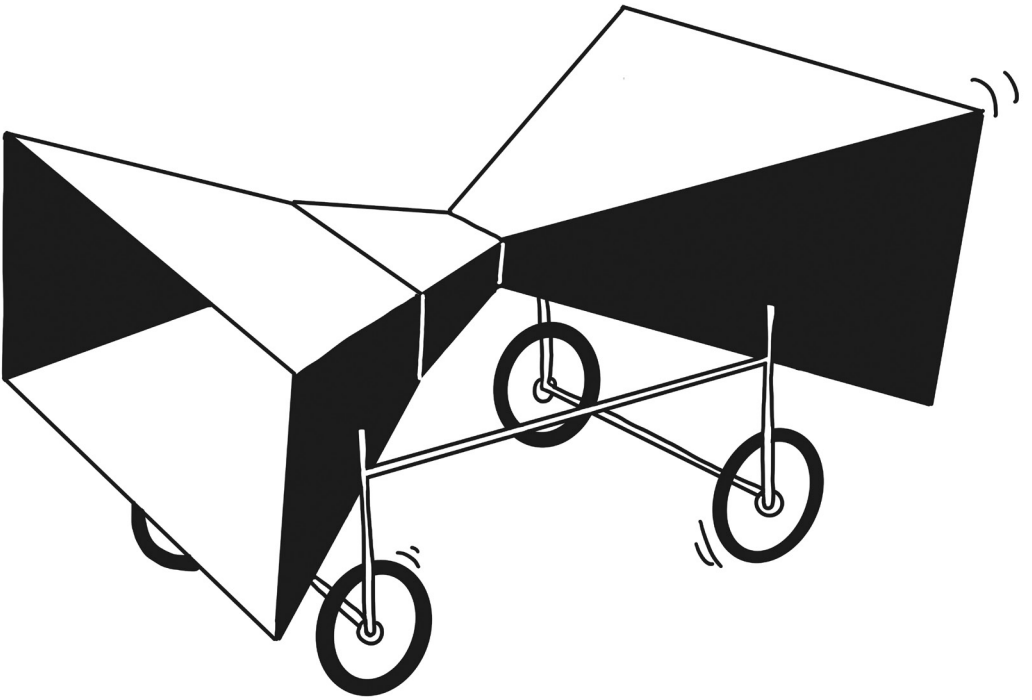
red for as „guests“ on a visit to the festival and, on the other hand, to create a natural oasis in the urban space in which people could engage with the sculptural natural objects and enter into a dialogue with them and the moss. A critical perspective was presented: Humans are depriving nature of its natural habitat in order to bring it to them instead of getting closer to it by going to its home. The installation combines a critical examination with a positive interactive experience that brings people and nature together and advocates for more human appreciation of the living spaces around them.











SEARCHING FOR A NON OBVIOUS CONNECTION

Felix Adam | Paul Groß | Luis Benz
Josephine Pavesi | Julian Glunde

The work Searching for a Non-Obvious Connection creates a connection between the cities of Frankfurt and Offenbach as part of the “Theater der Welten” festival. The search for a non-obvious connection between the places led us to the medium of sound and prompted us to look for paths beyond the Main River through the cities. The object was set up in three different places in each of the

two cities. It was moved from place to place performatively. It consisted of three parts: a central part with a recording device for the acoustic documentation of the performance and two cones through which the recording was played back at the locations after being transported there. The sound emanating from the oversized horn “surprised” the viewers with a quiet, subtle recording of the transport.







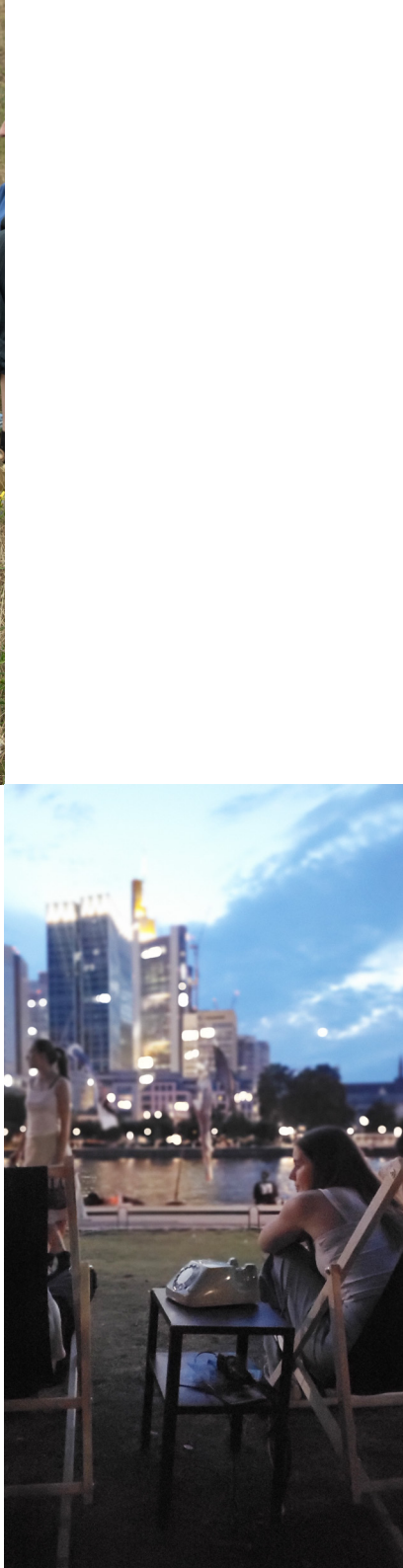
STORIES BETWEEN TWO CITIES

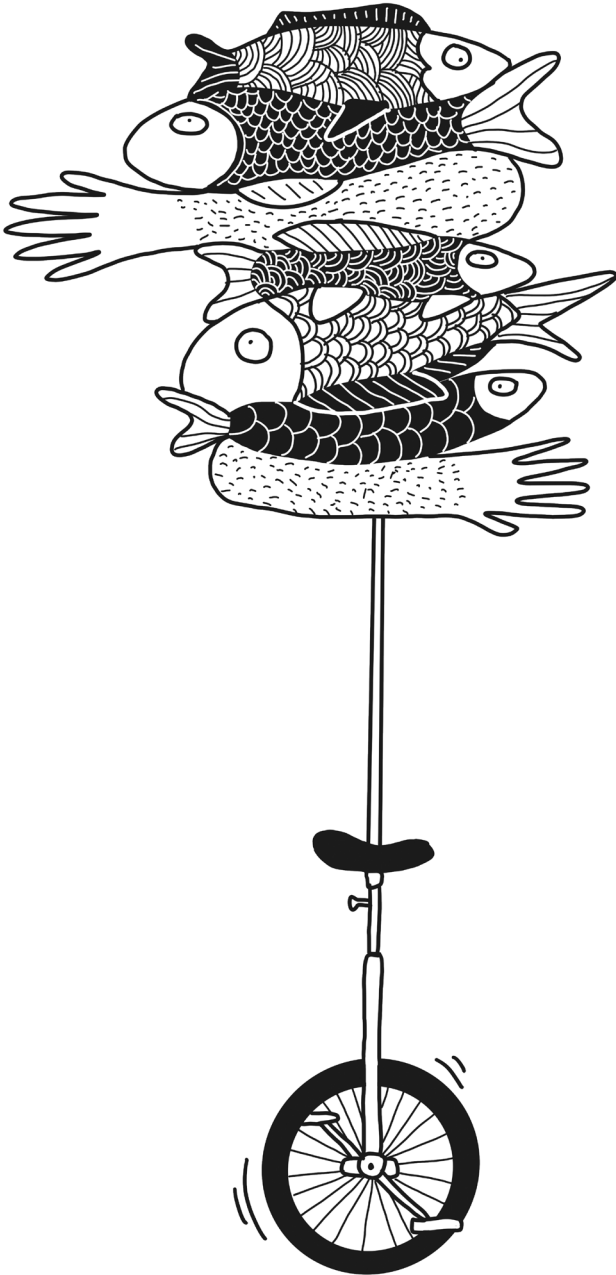
Laila Zaidi Touis

This installation broadcasts the collected stories from the citizens of Frankfurt and Offenbach on the answering machine of the phone number: (069) 87004283. The stories have been collected over a month in an ongoing process, and the phone number is still available. 240 paper ads and 70 posters have been hung in both towns. Around 100 flyers have been distributed. Email invitations to participate have been sent to homes for the elderly, unemployment offices, and the mayors as well as other political officials of

both towns. The installation consists of five pairs of deckchairs, with a small table and a rotary phone between each pair. Lying in the deckchairs, one can hear the heterogeneous mix of stories and messages left by anonymous people. Some of the messages are very dark, while others are light and playful or full of humor. One never knows what is true, but one can learn a lot about the anonymous people through their voices, tone of voice, choice of words, style of communication, and the content of their stories.







RII-BO-NO-I-KO, MAIN/MINE

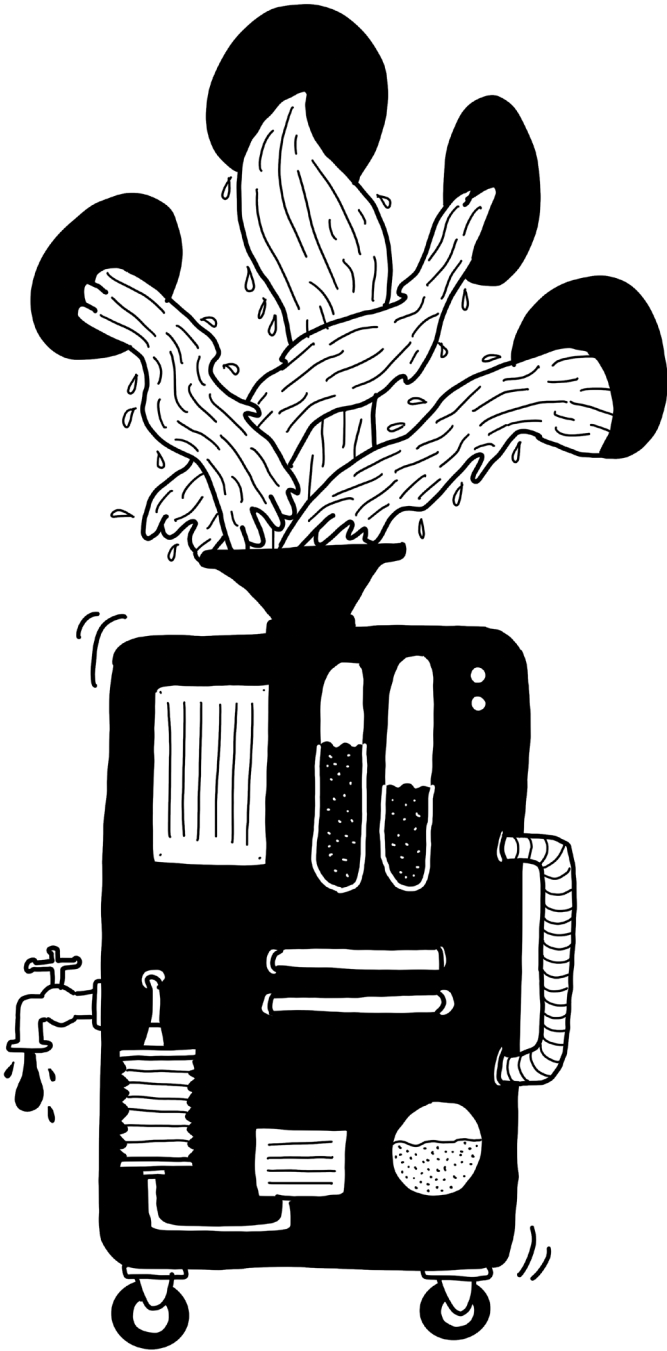
Miyuki Oka

The project is a site-specific installation and performance along the Main River between Frankfurt and Offenbach, focusing on the relationship between social structures and natural ecosystems. The artist conducted a survey of fish living in the river. They took pictures of fish and used the

pictures as reference to make fish kites. The kites were installed facing a traditional patriarchal Japanese carp streamer (koinobori). The artist rode a bicycle with the fish kites attached to it over a hydroelectric dam power plant which splits the natural fish habitat from itself.







CONTINUOUS PROCESS IN A SYSTEM OF RECIPROCITY

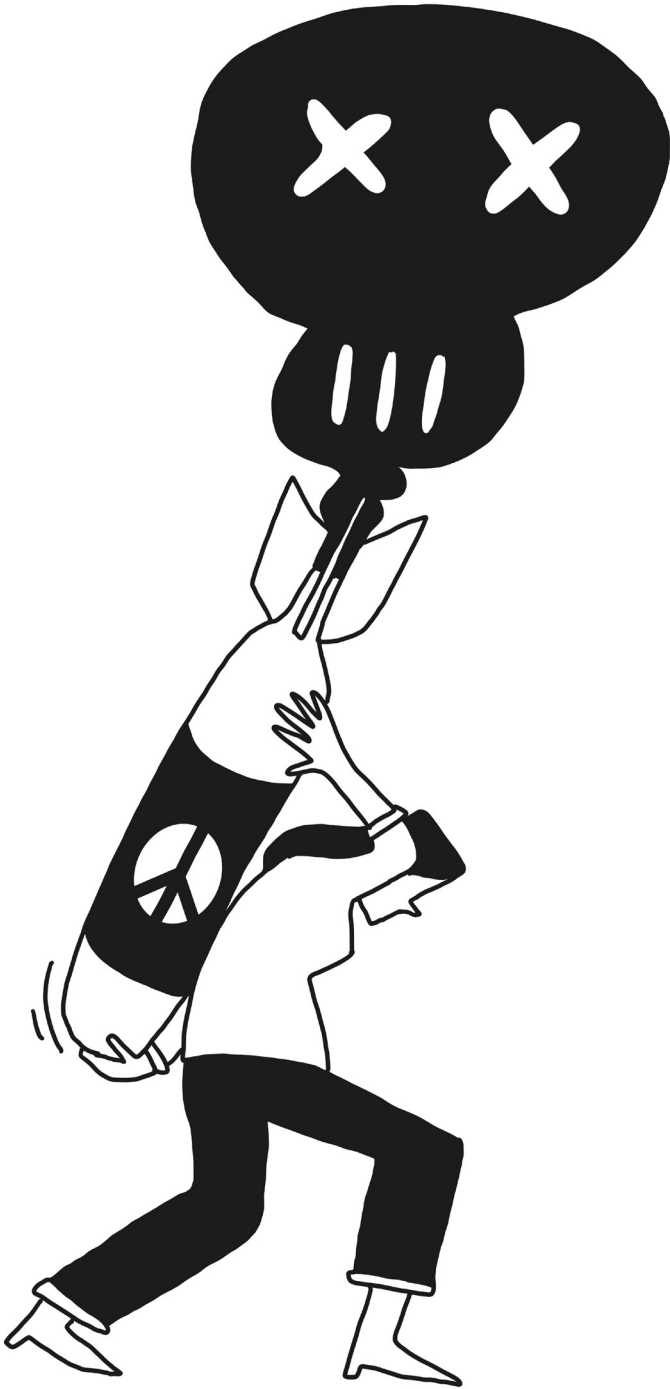
Jana Köhle

„continuous process in a system of reciprocity“ is a site specific work adjacent to the river „Main“ in Frankfurt am Main. the installation provides a space for interaction and discussion between the object and the spectator/participants passing by. water is collectively scooped out of the river creating a social ritual where a specific action can be directly linked to its results. the water

drawn, is put into a filtration machine, which activates a pump. the pump transports the filtered water to a plastic flower, which sprays the water wildly around itself. the flower is a rather silly toy in itself is juxtaposed to the riverside, and the massive skyscraper of the European Zentral Bank in the background, thus putting to question general attitudes towards daily usage and access to water.







THE STORY OF ARTILLERY SHELL

Alevtyna Melnychuk

“The story of bullet shell” is a story about an art piece that I tried to bring for the “Theater der Welten” festival from the Ukraine. The story represents the whole journey of coming up with an idea and then trying to bring it to life. I’ve

never thought that an object that is basically useless for everyone can be so hard to transport. The story depicted how my artwork was treated differently and revealed people’s final impression of me.







EASY FM2

Maeng Seungyeon

Reconstructing history is more urgent than establishing identity. Easy fm 1(independent fm) was a bundle of papers fighting for independence. While talking with a friend, I realized that if independence meant having to fight with oneself, it should be

something you can live with ease and comfort. But now, when I try to write just three more syllables next to my own writing, I hide behind several great names. Writing has been as fearful as everyday repetitive life, and I am looking at an expert of the norm.







WATERING WATER

Ano Jiskariani

The act illustrates how the privileged once, perched upon its boat, conscientiously tends to the well-being of every person and entity around it. With unwavering dedication, it not only nurtures its own prosperity but also ensures the vitality of its surroundings. As it gracefully sails through life, it fertilizes the soil of its existence, enriching it with - compassion, generosity, and a deep sense of responsibility. In essence, the prevailing and dominant group or authorities benefit from the under-represented or marginalized groups, thereby asserting their strength and augmenting their power. In recent

times, hundreds of LGBTQI+ individuals from Georgia have chosen to leave their home country and join the EU's Rainbow (LGBTQ|+) refugees program, which offers shelter and living expense support to those persecuted due to their sexual orientation. This program, spearheaded by Belgium, aims to create a workforce comprised of individuals from diverse backgrounds. Consequently, it becomes imperative to critically examine whether this form of assistance functions as a consumer-driven or colonial act, and more importantly, who truly benefits from it?

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*THEATER
DER WELT
2023*

hfg OF_MAIN

städtelschule

GAP

東京藝術大学大学院美術研究科
グローバルアートプラクティス専攻
Global Art Practice,
Graduate School of Fine Arts,
Tokyo University of the Arts

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LANDING.

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