



THE END OF HUMAN DOMINANCE

AN XTOPIAN INTERVENTION ON A SYMBIOTIC FUTURE

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Research project 'Urban Xtopia – Future Open Spaces'

URBANE XTOPIEN

AGENDA

I

~~WHAT ARE XTOPIA~~

The concept & research
project

II

~~THE INTERVENTION~~

A seminar at a design
department

III

~~EVALUATION~~

Implications



What are Xtopia?





Xtopia use ways of utopian and dystopian thinking

- Radical visions
- **Focus on ambivalences**
- High potential for controversy, dialogue & participation
- Feasibility less important

Images:

V. Callebaut „Paris 2050“;

H. Kiewert „No cars go“;

Film-Still „1984“ (Anderson 1956/G. Orwell 1948)

Film-Still „Blade Runner“ (R. Scott 1982 /P.K. Dick 1968)



Xtopia combine contents with formats

- Wide range of methods
 - Aesthetic
 - Analytic
 - Discursive
 - experimental
- Irritate and provoke

Images:
Graffiti at Xtopia „The Future of Work“
Xtopian circuit training station: „Reframe“
Workshop at Xtopia „The Future of Work“
Draft for Xtopian inheritance generator

Utopian –
dystopian
ideas



Formats
facilitating
access to
futures

Intervention
(Xtopia)



Xtopia train specific future competencies

- Phantasy & Imagination
- Thinking in complex systems
- Tolerance for ambivalence
- Ability to dialogue & critique
- Reflection & empathy



The seminar



Topic:
The end of
human
dominance



Format:
Project seminar
in higher
education



Design university
seminar
*„It's the end of the
world as we know
it“*

Spring 2021



Seminar concept

- Didactive principle: Transformative Learning (Mezirow, 2003, 2012, amongst others)
- Educational aims:
 - Design competencies
 - Future competencies (> Xtopia project)
 - **Learning how to think & design Xtopia**
- Currently repeated at Universität Kassel

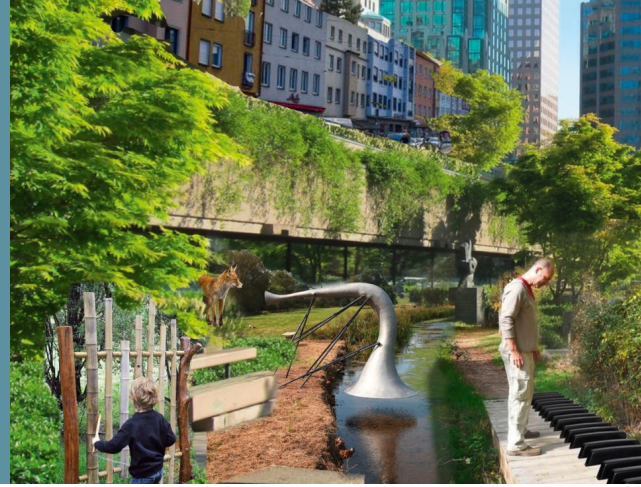
Exercises (ex.)

- #playspace Xperiment
- Stream of consciousness
- Utopian charge
- Design fiction (UMK; Dunne & Raby, 2013)
- Photo safari
- Shirin Yoku (forest bathing)

- **Xtopian stations of circuit training**



Neighborhood tidbit park
(Jeannie Köppe)

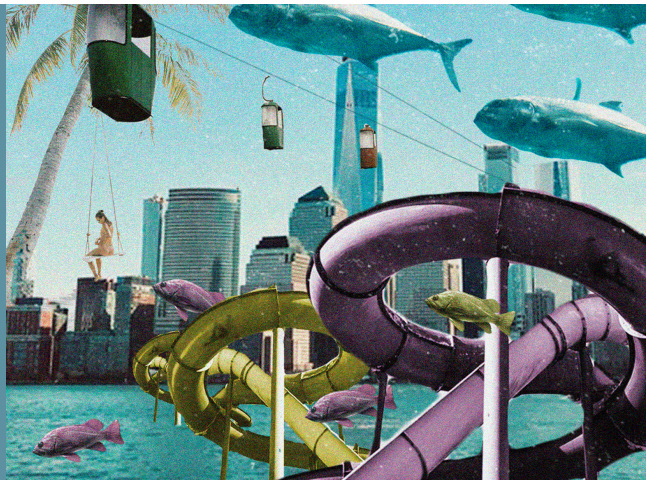


Vertical soundgarden
(Klara Lange)

#playspace Xperiment

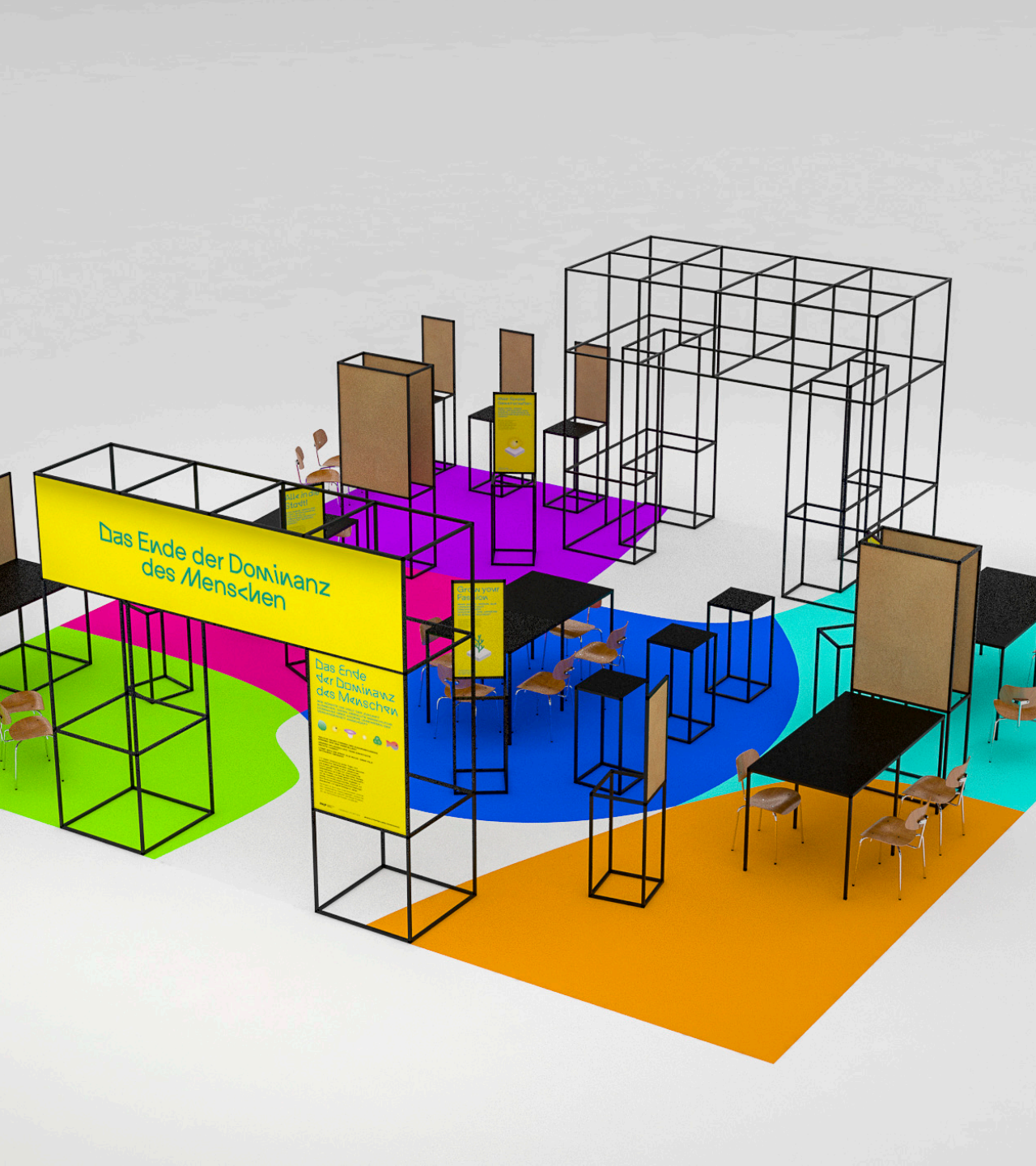
student visions

From A to B
(Ronja Heeland)



The ,who do I want to be'
playground
(Yolanda Kloss)





Circuit training: The end of human dominance

- Open air exhibition in small town (Eberswalde) close to Berlin
- All stations represented Xtopian interventions



Stations: What if...

- We could digest our own trash?
- Organisms grew on our skin as clothes?
- Humans and wild animals co-habited?
- ...

<http://dasendederdominanz.de/>

 **Evaluation** 



Collected data for seminar evaluation

- Reflective Monitoring in Action
(Van Mierlo et al., 2010)
- Student participant observation
- Interim survey & open reflection
- Final survey, open reflection
& projection (postcards)



Preliminary evaluation results

- Overall positive evaluation
 - inputs highly appreciated
 - pride on own exhibitions
- Challenges:
 - Ambivalences & openness
 - Critique from teachers
 - Discussions in Zoom
- **Indications of transformative learning**



Conclusion

- ‚Xtopian thinking‘ can and must be trained
- Potential for transformative learning in higher education
- Seminar concept will be provided open access

THANK YOU!

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Artwork by Florence Iff

