

Technosphere × Knowledge

April 14–16, 2016

April 14, 7–10pm

The Scenario Mode

With Peter Galison,
Sander van der Leeuw,
Claire Pentecost,
Sebastian Vehlken
Welcome by Katrin Klingan

FILM SCREENING · *Containment*

D: Peter Galison, Robb Moss,
Japan/USA 2014, 81 min,
English version

April 15, 7–10pm

Truth Measures

With Lawrence Abu Hamdan,
Keith Breckenridge, Melanie Gilligan,
Brian Holmes, Susan Schuppli
Welcome by Anselm Franke

April 16, 7–10pm

Wisdom Techniques

**With John Tresch, Jeremy Bolen & Andrew Yang,
Sasha Engelmann & Bronislaw Szerszynski
in collaboration with Tomás Saraceno,
FORMATIONS (Alex Martinis Roe & Melanie Sehgal
with Roman Brinzanik, Deborah Haaksman,
Rebekka Ladewig, Julian Schubert, Hendrik Weber)
Welcome by Christoph Rosol**

Wisdom Techniques

The interlacing between knowledge and the technosphere has a very subtle yet decisive dimension: the collectively, mentally, and physically ingrained practices and routines that are the preconditions for perceiving, coherently grasping and adequately responding to the non-human dynamics of a world in transition. What are the regimes of sense training, ascetic modes of inquiry, and techniques of mental cultivation that let us learn and understand something? What might be needed to reshape and modify these in light of the predicament of the Anthropocene? How does one establish forms of research which shape, as opposed to ignore, the interdependence between the technosphere and knowledge? Reflecting on the technospherical conditions of knowing suggests that a new kind of “wisdom” might be required. This evening introduces a constructive approach to the “technologies of the self” and “anthropotechnics” of knowledge and their dissemination. It will investigate knowledge practices, both ancient and new, through inventive and open-ended exercises: as bodily experiences and practices of imagination concerned not only with established facts, but with habits of perception, feeling, and action.

7h

Welcome by *Christoph Rosol*

Introduction

There Are No Religions
and Science is One of Them*John Tresch*

What place do techniques of the body, mind, and spirit—what Michel Foucault called “the practices of the self”—have in today’s technosphere? The vast range of what Peter Sloterdijk has recently renamed “anthropotechniques”—those regimens of training and repetitive exercise through which people transform themselves—can be seen as a determining fact of human history. Through new trainings, new modes of thought, feeling, intuiting, and acting become possible; by weaving anthropotechniques into new combinations and administering them both as individuals and as masses, humanity has made and remade itself. Ascetic disciplines have been most often associated with religious orders. Yet what are the anthropotechniques which go into the production of scientific knowledge (in observation, experiment, invention)? What regimes of practice have produced expertise? This talk will propose an “anthropotechnical” history of modern science as a means of comparing and linking technoscientific modes of subject-formation with those from other lineages. How might such a history contribute to cultivating the reflective capacities and ethical habits that are needed to shape and care for the technosphere?

JOHN TRESCH is Associate Professor of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania. His research focuses on the cultural history of science and technology in the modern world. He is the author of *The Romantic Machine: Utopian Science and Technology after Napoleon* (Chicago 2012) and co-editor of a special issue of *Grey Room Quarterly*, “Audio/Visual,” on media in the sciences and arts. He is currently working on a study of Edgar Allan Poe’s scientific writings, as well as a book called *Cosmograms: How to Do Things with Worlds*.

7.30pm

Demonstration

Potency and partial knowledge:
an exercise*Jeremy Bolen and Andrew Yang*

Making sense of where, what, and how we are in the technosphere defies simple comprehension. Earth scientist Peter Haff voices a common concern in claiming that our habitual attention to immediate experience risks distracting us from the often diffuse and inaccessible meta-complexities of the Anthropocene condition. Our human-scale perceptions distort our perception of the whole. The question for aesthetics in the technosphere, then, is how humans as “sub-ordinate parts” can take part, participate, and use their partial, experiential knowledge to gain perspective on the systemic whole that constitutes and powers the Anthropocene. How might modest, embodied practices help attune our collective awareness, expanding the reach of our (physical) senses as well as our (conceptual) sensibility? We propose a small exercise, a miniature anthropotechnique presenting an alternative to the abstractions of magnitude and scale through which the Anthropocene is so often perceived.

JEREMY BOLEN is a Chicago-based artist, researcher and educator interested in site-specific, experimental modes of documentation and presentation. Much of Bolen’s work involves rethinking systems of recording in an attempt to observe invisible presences that remain from various scientific experiments and human interactions with the earth’s surface. Bolen’s work is shown internationally. He has been an artist in residence at Ox-Bow School of Art and Artist’s Residency in Saugatuck, Michigan, The Center for Land Use Interpretation in Wendover, Utah, and Joshua Tree Highlands Artist Residency, California. Bolen currently is a Lecturer in the photography department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

ANDREW YANG is a transdisciplinary artist and scholar working across the interweaving of the natural, cultural, and bio-historical. His projects have been exhibited from Oklahoma to Yokohama, Chicago to Kassel, with new work for the 14th Istanbul Biennial in 2015. He holds a PhD in zoology and a master of fine arts degree in visual arts and is currently an associate professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In the fall of 2015 he was a visiting scholar at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science working on archival knowledge through the Anthropocene.

8 pm

Demonstration

Attuning (to) Atmospheres

Bronislaw Szerszynski and
Sasha Engemann in collaboration
with *Tomás Saraceno*

How do we know the element of air, and the forces that move it? If we listen to a breath of air, might we hear the echoes of the vast fluid, the thermodynamic infrastructure of matter and energy enveloping Earth? Will we see emergent patterns that transcend scales? This demonstration collaborates with air to propose ways of attuning our bodies, concepts and models to atmospheres, from the intimate to the global to the cosmic. To do so we demonstrate the Aerocene: a collective vision for an “alternative technosphere” initiated by artist Tomás Saraceno that uses membranes and envelopes to create different possibilities for atmospheric sensing, mobility and politics. In conversation and experiment with the Aerocene, convey an anthropotechnics of atmospheric sensing.

SASHA ENGELMANN is a creative ethnographer exploring and writing about contemporary artistic experiments with the poetics and politics of air. Over the past two years she has carried out site-based fieldwork at Studio Tomás Saraceno in Berlin, especially related to Saraceno’s residency with the French space agency CNES, and the long-term project *Becoming Aerosolar*. She lectures on geography and multidisciplinary arts practice at the Institut für Architekturbezogene Kunst (IAK), Technische Universität Braunschweig, and is completing a DPhil in Geography and the Environment at Oxford University.

BRONISLAW SZERSZYNSKI is head of the Department of Sociology at Lancaster University, UK. His research is concerned with developing new understandings of the changing relations between humans, the environment, and technology, drawing on social theory, qualitative sociological research, philosophy, and theology. In his current work he focuses on climate change and geo-engineering, the ecocapitalist imaginary, urban ethical foodscapes, and ways of decision making in an unstable world. In 2010, he directed the transdisciplinary research program *Experimentality* at the Institute for Advanced Studies, Lancaster University, exploring ideas and practices of experimentation.

9 pm

Demonstration

FORMATIONS

Propositions, Stories and Sketches
for Transdisciplinary Encounter

With *Alex Martinis Roe* and
Melanie Sehgal with *Roman Brinzanik*,
Deborah Haaksman, *Rebekka Ladewig*,
Julian Schubert, and *Hendrik Weber*

As a window into the research methods of the transversal working group FORMATIONS, the members present a series of formats for interdisciplinary encounter and collaboration, which were devised over the course of a year-long process of working together. These formats were developed using the specific methodologies and practices of the various members and the way in which they encountered one another in the FORMATIONS experiment. Thus, as situated propositions, each of these formats is presented within stories of the groups’ work together. This opens the methodological toolbox developed and tested throughout the year, shedding light on the potentialities, difficulties and vulnerability involved in transdisciplinary conversation and collaboration. These formats, as sketches and proposals, will be shared as a way of exploring their potential for development into speculative “wisdom techniques”. They all attempt to work on and within the zones of overlap of what Félix Guattari termed, “the three ecologies”—the mental, the social, and the environmental.

ROMAN BRINZANIK is a physicist, computational biologist and business developer for renewable energies. Currently, he is a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Molecular Genetics, Berlin, and at the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, Göttingen, focusing on molecular systems biology of energy metabolism and of cancer. He co-authored *Will We Live Forever?* (2010), containing conversations about the present and future of bio-, nano-, info- and neurosciences and about the technological manipulation of human nature. Together with KRAFTWERK he develops decentralized renewable energy solutions for emerging and developing economies such as Brazil, Egypt and Kenya.

DEBORAH HAAKSMAN is a yoga teacher with an academic background in dramatic writing. While graduating from Universität der Künste Berlin, she discovered yoga. Years of thorough exploration followed, traveling as an assistant to her mentor Ana Forrest, educating people around the globe. Forrest Yoga unites ancient indigenous techniques of healing with new findings in body therapy, psychology and neuroanatomy. Haaksman is the co-founder of Earthwalking, a biennial festival and platform dedicated to transdisciplinary learning, sacred adventures, and collective questing for the great mystery within everyday life.

REBEKKA LADEWIG is a cultural theory researcher and art historian. Before joining the Media Studies Department at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar in 2014 she was a research associate at the Institute of Cultural History and Theory at the Humboldt-Universität Berlin, where she was a research associate and coordinator of the research group Pictograms at the Interdisciplinary Laboratory: Image Knowledge Gestaltung from 2012–14. She is co-founder and editor of the magazine *ilinx. Berliner Beiträge zu Kulturwissenschaft* and the book series *ilinx-Kollaborationen* at Fundus/ PhiloFineArts, Hamburg. Currently she is working on the cultural technique of the bow and arrow and about the reception of Gestalt theory in the works of Kurt Goldstein, Michael Polanyi, and Marjorie Grene.

ALEX MARTINIS ROE is an artist and current fellow of the Graduate School at the Universität der Künste Berlin, and holds a PhD from Monash University, Australia. She is currently completing her project *To Become Two*: a series of films, workshops, public events and a book, as a social history of the collective feminist practices which invented the concept of 'sexual difference', and a collective experiment with this research through *Our Future Network*, becoming public through collaborations with *If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution* (Amsterdam), *Casco—Office for Art, Design and Theory* (Utrecht), and *Ar/ge Kunst Museum* (Bolzano). She pursues her work on the design of material-discursive dispositives through FORMATIONS.

JULIAN SCHUBERT is an architect operating in the extended field of the discipline. He is teaching the Master of Advanced Studies in Urban Design at the ETH Zurich with a focus on urban transformations in rapidly developing territories. Schubert co-founded the architectural firm *Something Fantastic* that aims to positively influence the creation of sustainable and beautiful livelihoods through smart, simple, and prototypical projects. Current projects include the design of the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale of Architecture 2016 on the topic *Making Heimat. Germany, arrival country*, as well as the publications *Housing Cairo — The Informal Response*, and *The Index for Those Who Want to Reinvent Construction*.

MELANIE SEHGAL is Professor of Literary, Science and Media Studies at the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder). She initiated FORMATIONS against the background of her research interests: forms of speculative thinking beyond the nature/culture divide such as classical pragmatism, process philosophy and science and technology studies. Her current research explores speculative histories and futures of aesthetics beyond modern bifurcations and new forms of critical thinking. Since 2012 she has hosted the workshop and lecture series *Experimental Speculations/Speculative Experimentations*. She is the author of *Eine situierte Metaphysik. Empirismus und Spekulation bei William James und Alfred North Whitehead* (2016).

HENDRIK WEBER is a composer, producer and artist. He is best known for his electronic dance music project *Pantha du Prince*. Other more experimental approaches are *glühen 4*, where he focuses on microtonal and digital self-destruction processes, and *Ursprung*, a platform for experiments with guitar and electronics. In his installations, sound interweaves with architecture and objects creating new experiential spaces. In 2011, Weber developed a post-apocalyptic dance piece together with the French collective *Last Last* shown at *Centre National de la Danse*, Paris, *Le Subsistance*, Lyon, and *Tanzquartier*, Vienna. In collaboration with Norwegian composer *Lars Petter Hagen* he investigated bells and melodic percussion for a piece in a 64 bell carillon.

Technosphere 2015–18

Technosphere x Knowledge is the second event within the framework of *Technosphere 2015–18*. In a collaborative undertaking with international scientists and artists, the project explores how technical, social, and ecological forces have become wired to create the contemporary global structure. How can this new network be understood and described? How can one live and act within it? Introduced by the geosciences as a means to understand the man-made ecology of new materials, built environments, energy and mobility infrastructures on planetary scale, the concept of the “technosphere” enables a critical examination of the omnipresence and power of technical systems whose often unintended consequences and internal dynamics have coalesced to form a quasi-autonomous power.
→ hkw.de/technosphere

Anthropocene Curriculum Campus: The Technosphere Issue

What forms of knowledge production, education and mediation are capable of meeting the challenges of a new human geological era? From April 14 to 22, 2016, the second edition of the *Anthropocene Campus*, a transdisciplinary teaching and learning experiment, will be held. It explores and tests new and critical fields of knowledge together with 200 scientists, artists, and cultural practitioners. This time the Campus examines the technosphere as a model for understanding the interactions between human, technological, cultural, environmental, and industrial spheres.
→ hkw.de/en/campus

A new component of the Earth system is emerging today, comparable in scale and function to the bio- and hydrosphere. It is driven by the intertwining of natural environments with vast socio-technical forces and an increasingly diverse array of “technological species”. *Technosphere x Knowledge* investigates the interlacing between this technosphere and current modes of knowledge production—how both condition, sustain, and multiply each other. Without modern science there is no technosphere, without the technosphere there is no contemporary knowledge. On the one hand, contemporary knowledge allows for the theoretical understanding and technical mastery of energy and matter, and, thereby, the existence of a technosphere itself. On the other hand, it is the technosphere that arranges, shapes, and propels current knowledge, for example, through media of data pooling and processing, institutionalized evidence production, and the anthropotechniques of learning and comprehending. These three evenings critically investigate exemplary practices and modes of what might be termed “technospherical knowledge,” its reciprocal facilitation and stabilization, the self-fulfilling prophecies and dead-ends this liaison implies, as well as the urgency and utopian potential it entails. It examines the technical means to speculate about an unknowable future, questions the metrics and measures of juridical evidence, and entrains alternative techniques and practices of knowing, sensing, and experiencing.

→ hkw.de/txk

#technosphere

Part of 100 Years of Now

Concept and Realisation: Katrin Klingan, Christoph Rosol
with Anna Sophie Luhn, Janek Müller and Nick Houde



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Haus der Kulturen der Welt is funded by



Federal Government Commissioner
for Culture and the Media



Federal Foreign Office