



## rivers of knowledge bulletin #5, July 2010

*»Plunging, plunging water. Roaring, ancient hypnosis.  
The river drowns the car dump, sparkles behind the masks«*

*Tomas Tranströmer, Snowmelt 1966*

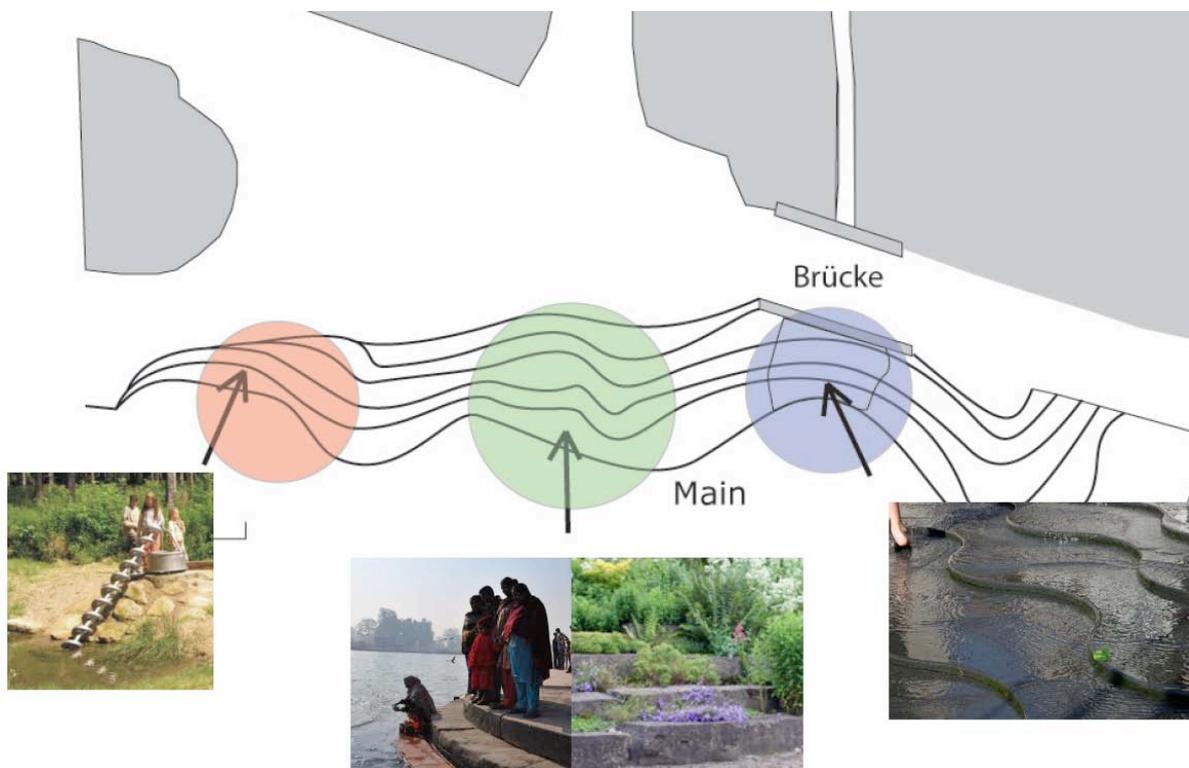
Here they are: Our conceptual design passed the presentation on July 9th: Our first project (design of the climate-path-stations) has crossed a decisive line: the presentation in front of those who are planning to realize and finance these stations. Our proposals turned out to be in part artistic interventions, in part didactical open air-classrooms. On July 9th, during a broiling day with feverish temperatures up to 37° C we offered what we had gathered during the semester. In the light of an enthusiastic reaction of our partners we can now go on to create models, scaled plans and detailed descriptions for next semester's team of graphic designers and for the engineers and planners who will hopefully turn our visions into a built reality.

Let 's take a walk along the Main riverside and through our 25 km long project area, starting at the first and westernmost spot – Kelsterbach's so called »Nizza«. Dipl. Des. Kai Linke and Johannes Schmidt-Knatz worked on the integration of specific regional characteristics of this spot with our chosen project river, the Daugava.



The Kelsterbach station deals with the place and connects it to alluvial forests and our partner river, the Daugava

The spot offers a wide and open view over the Main at Kelsterbauch/Raunheim. In an earlier stage of the project, when we first analyzed this place, I decided to chose the Daugava as corresponding river simply because of the similarity of this place to the pictures we had of the Daugava and on basis of our research results about its still intact alluvial forests. Before the regulation of the river Main in the 19th and early 20th century large parts of area north of the river at Kelsterbach was a labyrinth of swamps and meanders, home to manifold species and a complex aquatic ecosystem in a vast wetland. Kai and Johannes tried to figure out how to integrate this multi-faceted topic with the complex reaction of alluvial forests on climate change and man-made transformation of rivers. They decided to propose a combination of a restructuring of the place and the installation of a learning and playing area. Their proposal is segmented in four stages: 1. Installation of an Archimedean screw for pumping up river water to the level of the square plus the unsealing of the tarmac surface and installation of a river model of the Daugava. Thus people can pump up water and »flood« the Daugava river model in order to illustrate the effects of a deluge in riverscapes without dams and barrages. 2. Restructuring of the riverbank from the actual quarystone embankment into a terraced structure with planted seating steps. 3. Conversion of the bridge and re-naturation of the mouth of the Kelsterbach creek. 4. Installation of a wooden house from upstream Daugava.



The concept deals with opening the embankment by installing seating stairs and an Archimedean screw to pump up river water.

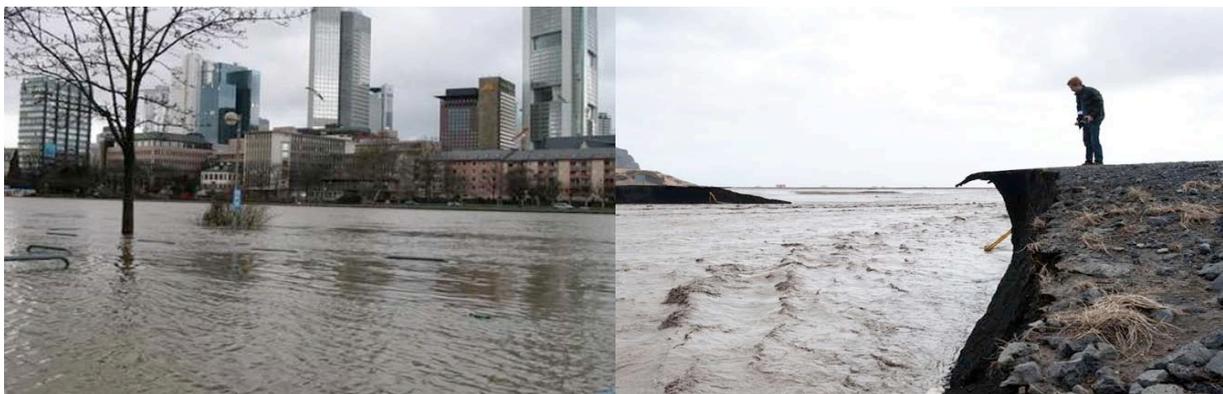


Moving East we encounter one of the most romantic spots of the project, the Niederräder Ufer, a part of an artificial island and a former barrage. This spot has a fascinating history as one of the earliest nudist river swims and the last swim where, during the Nazi-period, Jewish Frankfurters were officially allowed to spend their leisure time. A place with a tragic and sunny side, today being a natural retreat for a vast variety of birds, mammals and insects, also offering an artificial arm of the river as a spawning ground for fish. It's a tranquil spot right in the heart of the pulsating and noisy city.



The Niederräder Ufer offers a complex yet romantic situation in a Frankfurt city area which was formerly used as a barrage.

When in the 80s a former camping ground on the island was closed down, city nomads and homeless people illegally moved into this paradise. For more than 20 years this habitat had become home to an ever changing population, when in the early 2000s the Municipality decided to take action by evacuating the site and creating an official park, opening the area to the public. This new-found area offers fascinating possibilities to our project, and Dipl. Des. Till Hergenahn, Dipl. Des. Uwe Tischer and Johannes Schmidt-Knatz together with Dipl. Des. Martin Wenzel developed solutions for permanent and temporary use, applying light installations or objects which conserve the memory of the place, and which correspond with our project river Markarfljót and the topic we are focussing on in this spot: the impact of climate change on deluges. By fixing sculpture-like objects in the trees the often dramatic consequences of deluges are illustrated in a easily comprehensible way. By installing certain reminders of former habitats the designers wish to quote the social history of the place.



The Niederräder Ufer's references are the Icelandic river Markarfljót and deluges (left high water at the Main, right Markarfljót's destructive power.)



Seemingly stranded objects serve as reference point to the topic of climate change's impact on autumn-/spring floods at Niederräder Ufer.

Crossing the river in the Frankfurt East Harbour area, where the European Central Bank is about to erect their new general headquarter until 2014, the City of Frankfurt is building a new sports and leisure park. Where until only a few years ago cargo companies and junkyards were located, we found our spot, right beneath a strongly frequented railroad bridge, the Deutschherrenbrücke. Designer Franziska Bock decided to create a strong image by combining a typical Western wind wheel and an artificial surface inspired by drought-struck landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa. Okavango river, especially the Okavango delta in South African Botswana, is the corresponding river which we focus on to illustrate the effects of evaporation.



The Hafenpark project integrates our project river Okavango, the topic of evaporation and the spot, a railroad bridge.

If you look at the new park, Hafenpark, and Franziska's project as an entity, an interesting correspondence of surfaces can be seen. She creates an almost theatrical scenery by adding a stranded boat, quoting images we know from Aral Lake where, caused by climate change and canalisation of Amur Darya river, the sea water table has dropped dramatically. Opposite to the silent and almost hidden imagery at Niederräder Ufer, where we deal with the subtleness of the spot in order not to intervene too much, Franziska strives to create a strong image at a spot which is like an empty canvas.

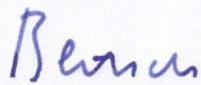


The broken surface, a symbolic boat and the Western windmill give the Hafenpark project a strong and emblematic character.

As this project can only be driven forward in interaction with the landscape architects developing the park, one of the next steps will be to discuss the special material choices for surfaces and objects. Also the spraying of river water is confronting us with complex questions which have to be answered in correspondence with a series of municipal institutions.

Please follow us to the next 8 projects through bulletins #6 and #7 in August and early September.

Hope you will find the time to spend some days off work - and see you again in August.



Prof. Georg-Christof Bertsch  
Frankfurt/Main, July 15<sup>th</sup> 2010