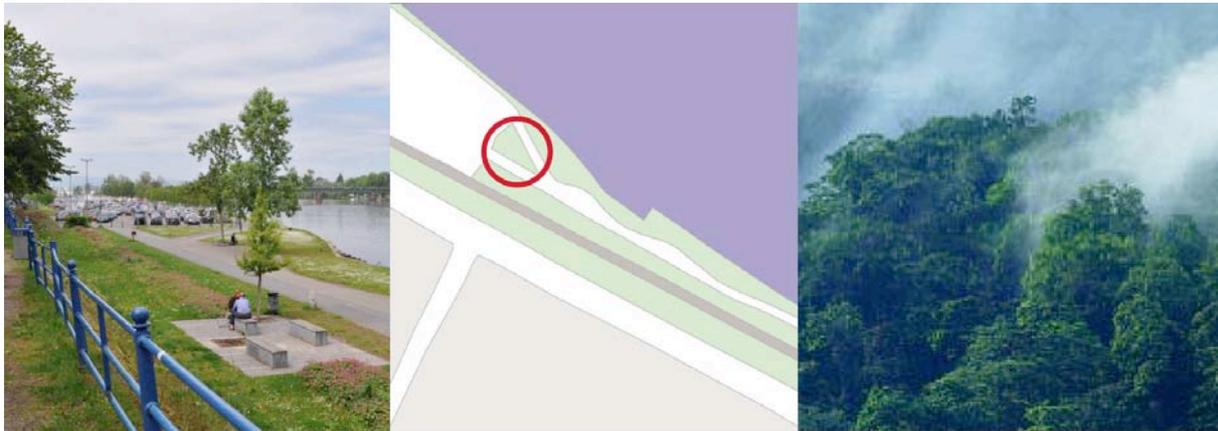


## rivers of knowledge bulletin #6, Aug. 2010

» I shall talk of water, this network of brooks and rivulets that flows together in the vale «

Marie Luise Kaschnitz, *Description of a village*, 1965, p. 13

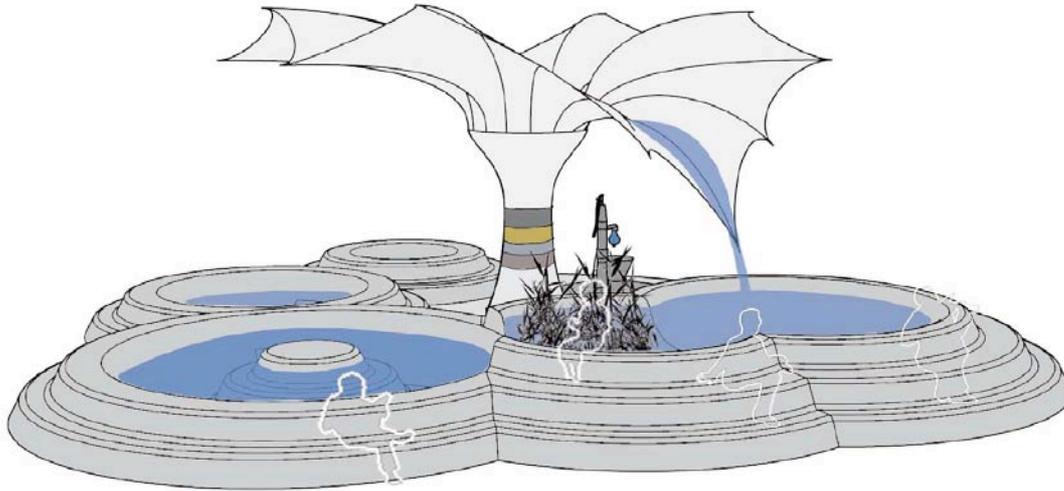
In the July bulletin #5 we started with the presentation of the projects. Eastbound we followed the river upstream from Kelsterbach to Frankfurt. Now we have reached Offenbach.



Explaining Climate Change's impact on the rainwater cycle right in the centre of town in Offenbach.

After a short stop-over on the northern river-bank in Frankfurt's Hafenpark we are now back on the Southern shore, in the very centre of Offenbach. Here we encounter the spot which inspired Dane Smith-Horne to create a »rain-fountain«. The rain-fountain catches the rain, purifies the water from acidic and dust components, stores it in a subterranean cistern and offers it to the cyclists for free. His idea integrates three important topics:

1. the political question of the commercialization of water and the discussion of rain-water-harvesting vs. bore holes.
2. the physical and biological process and effects of the global rain-cycle
3. the effects of climate change on rainwater and more generally global sweet-water cycles. Dane used formal characteristics of water and rain itself, by applying amplified raindrops on water for the exterior form of the fountain.



Dane's fountain is inspired by tropical plants and illustrates the crucial interrelation of climate change and the rain-cycle.

This sculptural object functions as a symbol to the entire climate-path but foremost as a strong intervention in the place where it is supposed to be located. While Franziska strives to create a strong image in a no-place (according to Marc Augés »Places and Non-places«) Dane deals with a spot which is populated but not yet fully defined. The entire form of his installation creates a strong characteristic for the place while the circular forms of the elements transmit a flow and act like a land-based buoy which gives you orientation.



The second station in Offenbach is supposed to become the central information spot where you'll get regional and global data.

The pontoon's main purpose is to deal with data and to transmit data about climate change in an easily understandable way to visitor of all ages. You will also find information about all the rivers included in the project, with a focus on Main River. Another specific task of this central station is to explain the impact of climate change on inner city climate situations.

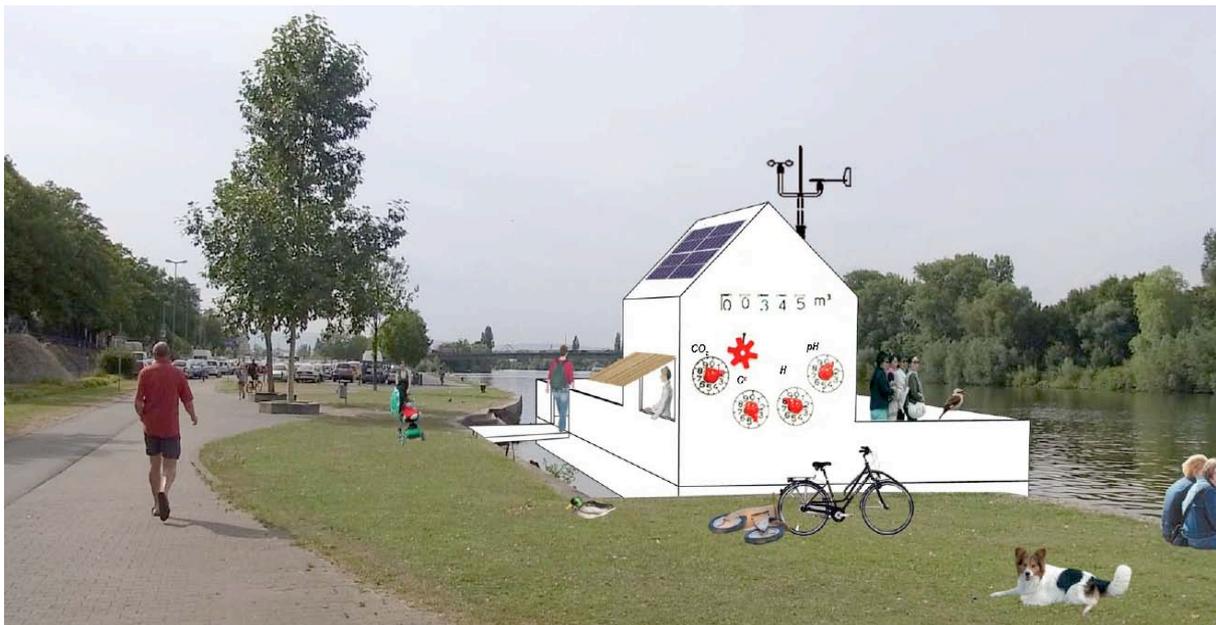


It serves also as crossroads between the city and the river and as a stage and gathering point for the people of Offenbach, including the option of a café or bar. Thus the little house carries a series of instruments and displays on the inside and outside, and the pontoon where it is located symbolizes the connection between river and city.

It is also a reference to a former, lost river island at this location. Kai chose a minimized, rather abstract form to integrate these multiple functions.

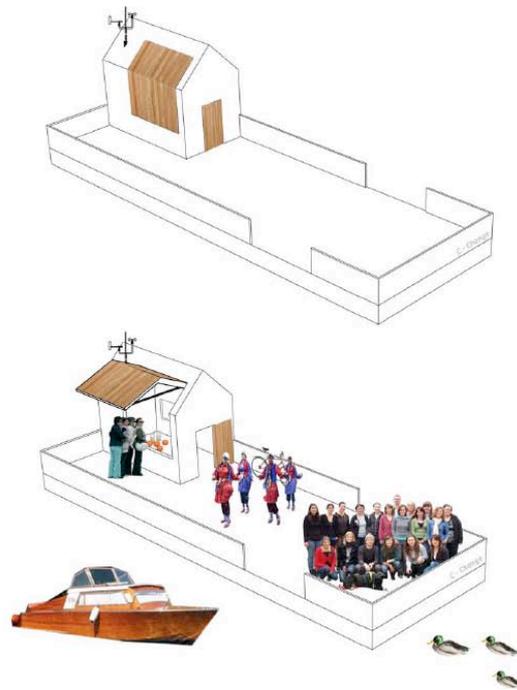
Similar to Oswald Matthias Unger's »house in the house« on the third floor of the German Architecture Museum, this »house on a boat« (instead of a house-boat) is rather a symbol than a building although it serves as a container for instruments and probably tools and tableware for the small café.

As central information-spot on all rivers it also serves as a cultural hub for activities in the multi-ethnic society in Offenbach.



Kai's design deals with the central and informative duties of this specific spot.

Kai's design thus serves as a blackboard for a multiplicity of uses and contexts. Its cross-road function in a practical sense is provided by one entry to the dockside and another to the river, offering a docking-point for small boats.



Mainuferpark: Main's river bank as a meeting-point of different cultures and ethnical groups of Offenbach.

Dipl. Des. Katja Kirchhoff and Dipl. Des. Sophie Muckle deal with cultural understandings and misunderstandings, prejudices and mental collages. Their topic is Indus river. Indus river rolls through an enormous, breathtaking landscape, reaching from Tibetan highlands through Indian Himalaya and almost all of Pakistan down to one of the biggest river-deltas, discharging its waters and sediments to the Arab Sea. Indus is often called »cradle of civilization«. Today we rather attribute Extremism and Islamism with this region, while the region is still a permanent source of cultural development and an enormous growth of population.



The »Fatamorana« of Katja Kirchoff / Sophia Muckle puts it in a nutshell: Climate is a global phenomenon.

The Indus the valley is also the most extensive irrigation system of the world, turning thousands of km<sup>2</sup> of desert into productive agricultural economies. The water of Himalayan glaciers feed 1/5 of the world population, amongst them most of the Pakistanis. Droughts are already causing massive migrations while stronger spring floods caused by climate change produce devastating deluges. The 2010 summer deluge has acquainted us with even more horrifying scenarios.



The Fatamorana will be a wonderful new attraction at Mainuferpark. We're already curious about feedback and comments.

The Mainuferpark is one of the favourite spots of Offenbachers. As soon as the sun comes out you'll find families and teenagers, lovers and elderly people sitting side by side at the benches, the river terraces or simply at the lawn. It is an ideal place to deal with mental images, dreams and projections. Sophie and Katja created a cultural and climatic absurdity, a surreal short-cut, by mashing up Main river with Himalayas in one image.



This simple and charming act of creativity creates one of the most emblematic images of the entire climate-path. Without word and in one integrated image it explains the interconnectedness of our world-climate and of our world-cultures.

I'm looking forward to introduce you to the other projects in Offenbach and Mühlheim in September. Take care.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bertsch'.

Prof. Georg-Christof Bertsch  
Frankfurt/Main, Aug 25th 2010